

INSTRUMENT AND ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT

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Putting Students First

INTRODUCTION

The Instrument and Articles of Government contain the legal basis of rules under which the College's governing body, the Corporation Board, must operate. They are set out in the Order made by the Secretary of State, *The Further Education Corporations (Former Further Education Colleges) (Replacement of Instruments and Articles of Government) Order 2007*, which came into force in January 2008. Amendments made under the Further Education Corporations (Former Further Education Colleges) (Modification of Instruments and Articles of Government) Order 2012 which came into force on 31 March 2012 have been included in this edition of the Instrument and Articles of Government.

The Instrument and Articles define the range and nature of the Corporation Board's responsibilities and set out the respective roles of the Board, the Principal and the Director of Governance.

The Board's main responsibilities are set out in article 3 of the Articles of Government:

- Determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and oversight of its activities
- Publishing arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational and mission of the institution and oversight of its activities;
- Approving the quality strategy
- Effective and efficient use of resources, solvency of the institution and Corporation and safeguarding their assets
- Approving annual estimates of income and expenditure
- Appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of pay and conditions of service of senior post holders and the Director of Governance
- Setting a framework for pay and conditions of service of all other staff

Three separate documents should be read in conjunction with the Instrument and Articles:

- The Financial Memorandum between the Skills Funding Agency and the College
- The Standing Orders for the Conduct of Corporation business which contain rules determined by the Corporation for conduct of business within the discretion allowed by the Instrument and Articles.
- The Code of Conduct for Governors which provides a guide for Members on expected

standards of conduct.

Governors are expected to be familiar with the contents of the Instrument and Articles and the above documents. Clarification and guidance can be obtained in the first instance from the Director of Governance.

Stephanie Taylor

Director of Governance

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INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT

1. Interpretation of the terms used

In this Instrument of Government:

- (a) “the College” means the college which the Corporation is established to conduct and any college for the time being conducted by the Corporation in exercise of its powers under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992;
- (b) “the Corporation” means any further education corporation to which this Instrument applies;
- (c) “the Director of Governance” means the clerk to the Corporation and anyone appointed under clause 6 as a Temporary Clerk in the Director of Governance’s absence;
- (d) “electronic form” and “electronic means” have the meaning given to them in section 1168 of the Companies Act 2006;
- (e) “Independent Members” has the meaning given to it in clause 2;
- (f) “this Instrument” means this Instrument of Government;
- (g) “meeting” includes a meeting at which the members attending are present in more than one room provided that by the use of tele-conferencing or video-conferencing facilities or similar communications equipment it is possible for every person present at the meeting to communicate with each other;
- (h) “necessary skills” means skills and experience, other than professional qualifications, specified by the Corporation as appropriate for members to have;
- (i) “the previous Instrument of Government” means the Instrument of Government relating to the Corporation which had effect immediately before 1st January 2008;
- (j) “the Principal” means the Principal and Chief Executive Officer and shall include a person acting as Principal and Chief Executive Officer;
- (k) “the Secretary of State” means the Secretary of State for Education;
- (l) “Staff Member” and “Student Member” have the meanings given to them in clause 2;
- (m) “staff matters” means the remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement of staff;
- (n) “the students’ union” means any association of students formed to further the educational purposes of the College and the interests of students, as students;
- (o) a “variable category” means any category of members whose numbers may vary according to clauses 2 and 3.

2. Composition of the Corporation

- (1) The Corporation shall consist of:
 - (a) up to thirteen members who appear to the Corporation to have the necessary skills to ensure that the Corporation carries out its functions under article 3 of the Articles of Government (“Independent Members”);
 - (b) the Principal of the College, unless the Principal chooses not to be a member;
 - (c) two members of staff who have a contract of employment with the College and who have been appointed as set out in clause 2(3)(a) and 2(3)(b) below (“Staff Member”);
 - (d) three members who are students at the College and who have been appointed as set out in clause 2(3)(c) and 2(3)(d) below (“Student Member”).
- (2) A person who is not for the time being enrolled as a student at the College, shall nevertheless be treated as a student during any period of authorised absence from the

College for study, travel or for carrying out the duties of any office held by that person in the College's students' union.

- (3) Staff Members and Student Members will be appointed in accordance with the process determined by the Corporation from time to time.

3. Determination of membership numbers

- (1) The Corporation may at any time vary the determination referred to in clause 2(1) and any subsequent determination under this paragraph provided that:
 - (a) the number of Independent Members of the Corporation shall not be less than [eight] or more than thirteen; and
 - (b) the numbers of members of each variable category shall be subject to the limit which applies to that category set out in clause 2(1).
- (2) No determination under this clause 3 shall terminate the appointment of any person who is already a member of the Corporation at the time when the determination is made.

4. Appointment of the members of the Corporation

- (1) Subject to clause 4(2) the Corporation is the appointing authority in relation to the appointment of its members.
- (2) If the number of members falls below the number needed for a quorum, the Secretary of State is the appointing authority in relation to the appointment of those members needed for a quorum.
- (3) The appointing authority may decline to appoint a person as a parent, staff or Student Member if:
 - (a) it is satisfied that the person has been removed from office as a member of a further education corporation in the previous ten years; or
 - (b) the appointment of the person would contravene any rule or bye-law made under article 19 of the Articles of Government concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve, provided that such rules or bye-laws make the same provision for each category of members appointed by the appointing authority; or
 - (c) the person is ineligible to be a member of the corporation because of clause 7.
- (4) Where the office of any member becomes vacant the appointing authority shall as soon as practicable take all necessary steps to appoint a new member to fill the vacancy.

5. Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair

- (1) The members of the Corporation shall appoint a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among themselves or seek to recruit a Chair and/or Vice-Chair by external advert provided that they are first appointed as an Independent Member.
- (2) Neither the Principal nor any Staff Member or Student Member shall be eligible to be appointed as Chair or Vice-Chair or to act as Chair in their absence.
- (3) If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from any meeting of the Corporation, the members present shall choose someone from among themselves to act as Chair for that meeting.
- (4) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall hold office for such period as the Corporation decides.
- (5) The Chair or Vice-Chair may resign from office at any time by giving notice in writing to the Director of Governance.
- (6) If the Corporation is satisfied that the Chair is unfit or unable to carry out the functions of office, or that it is in the best interests of the Corporation, it may give written notice, removing the Chair from office and the office shall then be vacant.
- (7) If the Corporation is satisfied that the Vice-Chair is unfit or unable to carry out the functions of office, or that it is in the best interests of the Corporation, it may give written notice, removing the Vice-Chair from office and the office shall then be vacant.
- (8) At the last meeting before the end of the term of office of the Chair, or at the first meeting

following the Chair's resignation or removal from office, the members shall appoint a replacement.

- (9) At the last meeting before the end of the term of office of the Vice-Chair, or at the first meeting following the Vice-Chair's resignation or removal from office, the members shall appoint a replacement.
- (10) At the end of their respective terms of office, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be eligible for reappointment.
- (11) Clause 5(10) is subject to any rule or bye-law made by the Corporation under article 19 of the Articles of Government concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve.

6. Appointment of the Director of Governance

- (1) The Corporation shall appoint a person to serve as its Director of Governance, but the Principal may not be appointed as Director of Governance.
- (2) The Corporation may delegate the appointment of the Director of Governance to the Chair of Governors and one other external Governor.
- (3) In the temporary absence of the Director of Governance, the Corporation shall appoint a person to serve as a temporary clerk ("Temporary Clerk"), but the Principal may not be appointed as Temporary Clerk.
- (4) Any reference in this Instrument to the Director of Governance shall include a Temporary Clerk appointed, from time to time, under clause 6(3).
- (5) Subject to clause 13, the Director of Governance or individual acting as Temporary Clerk shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Corporation and any of its committees.
- (6) The Director of Governance may also be a member of staff at the College.

7. Persons who are ineligible to be members

- (1) The following persons may not be appointed as a member of the Corporation and shall be ineligible from continuing to be a member of the Corporation:
 - (a) anyone under the age of 18 years, except as a Student Member;
 - (b) the Director of Governance;
 - (c) anyone who is a member of staff of the College except:
 - i. as a Staff Member; or
 - ii. in the capacity of Principal; or
 - iii. a student who is employed by the Corporation in connection with the student's role as an officer of a students' union;
 - (d) anyone who is disqualified from acting as a charity trustee under the Charities Act 2011 (as amended from time to time);
 - (e) subject to clauses 7(2) and 7(3), anyone who:
 - i. has been adjudged bankrupt;
 - ii. is subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking within the meaning of the Insolvency Act 1986;
 - iii. has made a composition or arrangement with creditors including an individual voluntary arrangement.
 - (f) Subject to clause 7(4), anyone who:
 - i. within the previous five years has been convicted, whether in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, of any offence and has received a sentence of

- imprisonment, whether suspended or not, for a period of three months or more, without the option of a fine; or
 - ii. within the previous twenty years has been convicted as set out in sub-clause (i) and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, for a period of more than two and a half years; or
 - iii. has at any time been convicted as set out in sub-clause (i) and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, of more than five years.
 - (g) Any person in respect of which the Corporation has reasonable grounds for believing that that person presents a risk to the health, safety or welfare of children or vulnerable adults.
 - (h)
- (2) Where a person is disqualified under clause 7(1)(e)(i) or 7(1)(e)(ii) that disqualification shall cease:
 - (a) on that person's discharge from bankruptcy, unless the bankruptcy order has before then been annulled; or
 - (b) if the bankruptcy order is annulled, at the date of that annulment; or
 - (c) if the bankruptcy restrictions order is rescinded as a result of an application under section 375 of the Insolvency Act 1986, on the date so ordered by the court; or
 - (d) if the interim bankruptcy restrictions order is discharged by the court, on the date of that discharge; or
 - (e) if the bankruptcy restrictions undertaking is annulled, at the date of that annulment.
- (3) Where a person is disqualified under clause 7(1)(e)(iii), the disqualification shall cease on the date on which the debt is paid in full and payment is completed and in any other case it shall cease on the expiration of three years from the date on which the terms of the deed of composition, arrangement or individual voluntary arrangement are fulfilled.
- (4) For the purpose of this clause 7, there shall be disregarded any conviction by or before a court outside the United Kingdom for an offence in respect of conduct which, if it had taken place in the United Kingdom, would not have constituted an offence under the law then in force anywhere in the United Kingdom.
- (5) Upon a member of the Corporation becoming disqualified from continuing to hold office under this clause 7, the member shall immediately give notice of that fact to the Director of Governance.

8. The term of office of a member

- (1) A member of the Corporation shall hold and vacate office in accordance with the terms of the appointment, but the length of the term of office shall not exceed four years.
- (2) Members retiring at the end of their term of office shall be eligible for reappointment, and clause 4 shall apply to the reappointment of a member as it does to the appointment of a member.
- (3) Clause 8(2) is subject to any rule or bye-law made by the Corporation under article 19 of the Articles of Government concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve.

9. Termination of membership

- (1) A member may resign from office at any time by giving notice in writing to the Director of Governance.
- (2) If at any time the Corporation is satisfied that:
 - (a) any member is unfit or unable to discharge the functions of a member; or
 - (b) any member has been absent from meetings of the Corporation for a period longer than six consecutive months without the permission of the Corporation; or
 - (c) any member has been dishonest or acted in any manner which, in the reasonable opinion of the Corporation, brings or is likely to bring the College into disrepute or is

- materially adverse to the College's interests; or
- (d) any member has breached the code of conduct applying to the members of the Corporation; or
- (e) any member is disqualified from being a member under clause 7; or
- (f) it is in the best interest of the Corporation,

the Corporation may by notice in writing to that member remove the member from office and the office shall then be vacant.

- (3) Any person who is a member of the Corporation by virtue of being a member of the staff at the College, including the Principal, shall cease to hold office upon ceasing to be a member of the staff and the office shall then be vacant.
- (4) A Student Member shall cease to hold office: -
 - (a) at the end of the student's final academic year, or at such other time in the year after ceasing to be a student as the Corporation may decide; or
 - (b) if expelled from the College, and the office shall then be vacant.
- (5) In such cases where a Staff Member is suspended from their duties or a Student Member is suspended from their studies, the Corporation has the right to suspend such members from the Corporation.

10. Members not to hold interests in matters relating to the College

- (1) A member to whom clause 10(2) applies shall: -
 - (a) disclose to the Corporation the nature and extent of the interest; and
 - (b) if present at a meeting of the Corporation, or of any of its committees, at which such supply, contract or other matter as is mentioned in clause 10(2) is to be considered, not take part in the consideration or vote on any question with respect to it and not be counted in the quorum present at the meeting in relation to a resolution on which that member is not entitled to vote; and
 - (c) withdraw, if present at a meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which such supply, contract or other matter as is mentioned in clause 10(2) is to be considered, where required to do so by a majority of the members of the Corporation or committee present at the meeting.
- (2) This clause applies to a member who: -
 - (a) has any financial interest in: -
 - i. the supply of work to the College, or the supply of goods for the purposes of the College;
 - ii. any contract or proposed contract concerning the College; or
 - iii. any other matter relating to the College; or
 - (b) has any other interest of a type specified by the Corporation in any matter relating to the College.
- (3) This clause shall not prevent the members considering and voting upon proposals for the Corporation to insure them against liabilities incurred by them arising out of their office or the Corporation obtaining such insurance and paying the premium.
- (4) Where the matter under consideration by the Corporation or any of its committees relates to the pay and conditions of all staff, or all staff in a particular class, a Staff Member: -
 - (a) need not disclose a financial interest; and
 - (b) may take part in the consideration of the matter, vote on any question with respect to it and count towards the quorum present at that meeting, provided that in so doing, the Staff Member acts in the best interests of the Corporation as a whole and does not seek to represent the interests of any other person or body, but
 - (c) shall withdraw from the meeting if the matter is under negotiation with staff and the Staff Member is representing any of the staff concerned in those negotiations.
- (5) The Director of Governance shall maintain a register of the interests of the members which have been disclosed and the register shall be made available during normal office hours at

the College to any person wishing to inspect it.

11. Meetings

- (1) The Corporation shall meet at least once in every term, and shall hold such other meetings as may be necessary.
- (2) Subject to clauses 11(6) and 11(7) and to clause 12(4), all meetings shall be called by the Director of Governance, who shall, at least five calendar days before the date of the meeting, send to the members of the Corporation written notice of the meeting and a copy of the proposed agenda, including in electronic form by electronic means.
- (3) Any notice given under clause 11(2) must state that it concerns a notice of Corporation meeting and must specify the place, date and time of the meeting.
- (4) A member present in person at any meeting of the College shall be deemed to have received notice of the meeting and of the purposes for which it was called.
- (5) If it is proposed to consider at any meeting the remuneration, conditions of service, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement of the Director of Governance, the Chair shall, at least five calendar days before the date of the meeting, send to the members a copy of the agenda item concerned, together with any relevant papers.
- (6) A meeting of the Corporation, called a "special meeting", may be called at any time by the Chair or at the request in writing of any five members, three of which must be Independent Members.
- (7) Where the Chair, or in the Chair's absence the Vice-Chair, decides that there are matters requiring urgent consideration, the written notice convening the special meeting and a copy of the proposed agenda may be given within less than five calendar days.
- (8) Every member shall act in the best interests of the Corporation and shall not be bound to speak or vote by mandates given by any other body or person.
- (9) Where a member participates in a meeting by tele-conferencing or video-conferencing:
 - (a) provided that that member can communicate with all other members, such participation shall constitute presence in person at the relevant meeting and, subject to these Instrument and Articles of Government, that member shall be entitled to vote and be counted in a quorum accordingly; and
 - (b) the meeting shall be deemed to take place where the largest group of those participating is assembled or, if there is no such group where the chair of the meeting then is.

12. Quorum

- (1) Meetings of the Corporation shall be quorate if the number of members present is at least 40% (rounded up to the nearest whole number) of the total number of members entitled to vote on the issue under consideration, determined according to clause 2 and the provisions set out in the Standing Orders.
- (2) If the number of members present for a meeting of the Corporation does not constitute a quorum, the meeting shall not be held.
- (3) If during a meeting of the Corporation there ceases to be a quorum, the meeting shall be terminated at once.
- (4) If a meeting cannot be held or cannot continue for lack of a quorum, the Chair may call a special meeting as soon as it is convenient.
- (5) Members who declare an interest in an item shall not count towards the quorum.

13. Proceedings of meetings

- (1) Every question to be decided at a meeting of the Corporation shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast by members present and entitled to vote on the question.
- (2) Where, at a meeting of the Corporation, there is an equal division of votes on a question to be decided, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- (3) A member may not vote by proxy or by way of postal vote.
- (4) No resolution of the members may be rescinded or varied at a subsequent meeting

unless consideration of the rescission or variation is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.

- (5) Except as provided by procedures made pursuant to article 13 of the Articles of Government, a member of the Corporation who is a member of staff at the College, including the Principal, shall withdraw:
 - (a) from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which staff matters relating solely to that member of the staff, as distinct from staff matters relating to all members of staff or all members of staff in a particular class, are to be considered;
 - (b) from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which that member's reappointment or the appointment of that member's successor is to be considered;
 - (c) from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which the matter under consideration concerns the pay or conditions of service of all members of staff, or all members of staff in a particular class, where the member of staff is acting as a representative (whether or not on behalf of a recognised trade union) of all members of staff or the class of staff (as the case may be); and
 - (d) if so required by a resolution of the other members present, from that part of any meeting of the Corporation or any of its committees, at which staff matters relating to any member of staff holding a post senior to that member's are to be considered, except those relating to the pay and conditions of all staff or all staff in a particular class.
- (6) A Principal who has chosen not to be a member of the Corporation shall still be entitled to attend and speak, or otherwise communicate, at all meetings of the Corporation and any of its committees, except that the Principal shall withdraw in any case where the Principal would be required to withdraw under clause 13(5).
- (7) A Student Member who is under the age of 18 shall not vote at a meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, on any question concerning any proposal:
 - (a) for the expenditure of money by the Corporation; or
 - (b) under which the Corporation, or any members of the Corporation, would enter into any contract, or would incur any debt or liability, whether immediate, contingent or otherwise.
- (8) Except as provided by rules made under article 15(3) of the Articles of Government relating to appeals and representations by students in disciplinary cases, a Student Member shall withdraw from that part of any meeting of the Corporation or any of its committees, at which a student's conduct, suspension or expulsion is to be considered.
- (9) In any case where the Corporation, or any of its committees, is to discuss staff matters relating to a member or prospective member of staff at the College, a Student Member shall:
 - (a) take no part in the consideration or discussion of that matter and not vote on any question with respect to it; and
 - (b) where required to do so by a majority of the members, other than Student Members, of the Corporation or committee present at the meeting, withdraw from the meeting.
- (10) The Director of Governance:
 - (a) shall withdraw from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which the Director of Governance's remuneration, conditions of service, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement in the capacity of Director of Governance are to be considered; and
 - (b) where the Director of Governance is a member of staff at the College, the Director of Governance shall withdraw in any case where a member of the Corporation is required to withdraw under clause 13(5).
- (11) If the Director of Governance withdraws from a meeting, or part of a meeting, of the Corporation under clause 13(10), the Corporation shall appoint a person from among themselves to act as Director of Governance during this absence.

- (12) If the Director of Governance withdraws from a meeting, or part of a meeting, of a committee of the Corporation, the Corporation shall appoint a person from among themselves to act as Director of Governance to the committee during this absence.

14. Written Resolutions

- (1) A resolution in writing agreed by a simple majority of the Members who would have been entitled to vote upon it had it been proposed that a meeting shall be effective provided that:
- (a) A copy of the proposed resolution has been sent to every eligible member;
 - (b) A simple majority of the members have signified agreement to the resolution; and
 - (c) It is contained in a document authenticated by the Director of Governance which has been received at the address specified by the college for the receipt of documents within the period of 28 days beginning with the circulation date.
- (2) A resolution in writing may comprise several copies to which one or more members have signified their agreement.
- (3) A written resolution will lapse if it is not passed before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the circulation date.
- (4) For the purposes of clause 14(3) "circulation date" is the day on which copies of the written resolution are sent or submitted to members or, if copies are sent or submitted on different days, to the first of those days.
- (5) The outcome of written resolutions shall be taken as an agenda item to the next meeting which is not a special meeting.

15. Minutes

- (1) Written minutes of every meeting of the Corporation shall be prepared, and, subject to clause 15(2), at every meeting of the Corporation the minutes of the last meeting shall be taken as an agenda item.
- (2) Clause 15(1) shall not require the minutes of the last meeting to be taken as an agenda item at a special meeting, but where they are not taken, they shall be taken as an agenda item at the next meeting which is not a special meeting.
- (3) Where minutes of a meeting are taken as an agenda item and agreed to be accurate, those minutes shall be signed as a true record by the Chair of the meeting.
- (4) Separate minutes shall be taken of those parts of meetings from which Staff Members, the Principal, Student Members or the Director of Governance have withdrawn from a meeting in accordance with clauses 13(5), 13(6), 13(8), 13(9) or 13(10) and such persons shall not be entitled to see the minutes of that part of the meeting or any papers relating to it.

16. Public access to meetings

The Corporation shall decide any question as to whether a person should be allowed to attend any of its meetings where that person is not a member, the Director of Governance or the Principal and in making its decision, it shall give consideration to clause 17(2).

17. Publication of minutes and papers

- (1) Subject to clause 17(2), the Corporation shall ensure that a copy of:
- (a) the agenda for every meeting of the Corporation;
 - (b) the draft minutes of every such meeting, if they have been approved by the Chair of the meeting;
 - (c) the approved minutes of every such meeting; and
 - (d) any report, document or other paper considered at any such meeting, shall as soon as possible be made available during normal office hours at the College to any

- person wishing to inspect them.
- (2) There shall be excluded from any item made available for inspection any material relating to:
 - (a) a named person employed at or proposed to be employed at the College;
 - (b) a named student at, or candidate for admission to, the College;
 - (c) the Director of Governance; or
 - (d) any matter which, by reason of its nature, the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.
 - (3) The Corporation shall ensure that a copy of the draft or approved minutes of every meeting of the Corporation, under clause 17(1), shall be placed on the College's website, and shall, despite any rules the Corporation may make regarding the archiving of such material, remain on its website for a minimum period of 12 months.
 - (4) The Corporation shall review regularly all material excluded from inspection under clause 17(2)(d) and make any such material available for inspection where it is satisfied that the reason for dealing with the matter on a confidential basis no longer applies, or where it considers that the public interest in disclosure outweighs that reason.

18. Copies of the Instrument of Government

A copy of this Instrument shall be given free of charge to every member of the Corporation and at a charge not exceeding the cost of copying or free of charge to any other person who so requests a copy, and shall be available for inspection at the College upon request, during normal office hours, to every member of staff and every student.

19. Change of name of the Corporation

The Corporation may change its name with the approval of the Secretary of State.

20. Application of the seal

The application of the seal of the Corporation shall be authenticated by:

- (a) the signature of either the Chair or of some other member authorised either generally or specially by the Corporation to act for that purpose; and
- (b) the signature of any other member.

21. Means of communication to be used

- (1) Any notice or other document to be given to or by any person pursuant to this Instrument:
 - (a) must be in writing; or
 - (b) must be given in electronic form.
- (2) The College may give any notice or other documents to a member either:
 - (a) personally; or
 - (b) by sending it by post in a prepaid envelope addressed to the member at his or her address; or
 - (c) by leaving it at the address of the member; or
 - (d) by giving it in electronic form to an email address specified by that member from time to time; or
 - (e) by placing the notice on a website and providing the person with a notification in writing or in electronic form of the presence of the notice on the website. Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given.
- (3) Proof that an electronic form of notice was given shall be conclusive where the college can demonstrate that it was properly addressed and sent.
- (4) Notice shall be deemed to be given:

- (a) 48 hours after the envelope containing it was posted; or
 - (b) in the case of an electronic form of communication, 48 hours after it was sent
- (5) The members must agree in writing to receive documents and notices from the College by electronic means.
- (6) Only such documents and notices as are specified by the College may be sent to the College in electronic form to the address specified by the College for that purpose and such documents or notices sent to the College are sufficiently authenticated if the identity of the sender is confirmed in the way the College has specified.

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ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT

1. Interpretation of the terms used

In these Articles of Government:

- (a) any reference to “the Principal” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government;
- (b) “the Articles” means these Articles of Government;
- (c) “Chair” and “Vice-Chair” mean respectively the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Corporation appointed under clause 6 of the Instrument of Government;
- (d) “the Corporation” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government;
- (e) “the Director of Governance” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government;
- (f) “ESFA” means the Education and Skills Funding Agency or any successor body;
- (g) “Staff Member” and “Student Member” have the same meanings as in the Instrument of Government;
- (h) “the Secretary of State” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government;
- (i) “senior post” means the post of Principal and such other senior posts as the Corporation may decide for the purposes of these Articles;
- (j) “the staff” means all the staff who have a contract of employment with the College;
- (k) “the students’ union” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government.

2. Conduct of the College

The College shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Instrument of Government, these Articles, any rules or bye-laws made under these Articles and any trust deed regulating the College.

3. Responsibilities of the Corporation, the Principal and the Director of Governance

- (1) The Corporation shall be responsible for the following functions:
 - (a) the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the College and the oversight of its activities;
 - (b) publishing arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission on the College and the oversight of its activities;
 - (c) approving the quality strategy of the College;
 - (d) the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the College and the Corporation and safeguarding their assets;
 - (e) approving annual estimates of income and expenditure;
 - (f) the appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of service of the holders of senior posts and the Director of Governance, including, where the Director of Governance is, or is to be appointed as, a member of staff, the Director of Governance’s appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of pay in the capacity of a member of staff; and

- (g) setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff.
- (2) Subject to the responsibilities of the Corporation, the Principal shall be the Chief Executive of the College, and shall be responsible for the following functions:
 - (a) making proposals to the Corporation about the educational character and mission of the College and implementing the decisions of the Corporation;
 - (b) the determination of the College's academic and other activities;
 - (c) 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;
 - (d) the organisation, direction and management of the College and leadership of the staff;
 - (e) the 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 Director of Governance, where the Director of Governance is also a member of the staff; and
 - (f) maintaining student discipline and, within the rules and procedures provided for within these Articles, suspending or expelling students on disciplinary grounds or expelling students for academic reasons.
- (3) The Director of Governance shall be responsible for the following functions:
 - (a) advising the Corporation with regard to the operation of its powers;
 - (b) advising the Corporation with regard to procedural matters;
 - (c) advising the Corporation with regard to the conduct of its business; and
 - (d) advising the Corporation with regard to matters of governance practice.

4. The establishment of committees and delegation of functions generally

- (1) The Corporation will establish an Audit Committee and may establish other committees for any purpose or function, other than those assigned in these Articles to the Principal or Director of Governance and may delegate powers to-
 - (a) such committees;
 - (b) the Chair, or in the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair; or
 - (c) the Principal.
- (2) The number of members of a committee and the terms on which they are to hold and to vacate office, shall be decided by the Corporation.
- (3) The Corporation may also establish committees under collaboration arrangements made with other further education Colleges or maintained schools (or with both), and such joint committees shall be subject to any regulations made under section 166 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 governing such arrangements.

5. The Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee

- (1) The Corporation shall establish a committee, to be known as the "Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee", to advise on:
 - (a) governance matters and best practice;
 - (b) the appointment of members (other than as a Staff Members or Student Member); and
 - (c) member's training and knowledge;
 - (d) such other matters relating to governance, membership of the Corporation and appointments that the Corporation may ask the committee to advise.
- (2) The Corporation shall not appoint any person as a member (other than as a Staff Member or Student Member) without first consulting and considering the advice of the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee.

- (3) The Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee shall advise the Corporation on the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Corporation and the appointment of a chair to each of its committees.
- (4) The Corporation may make rules specifying the way in which the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee is to be conducted. A copy of these rules, together with the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee's terms of reference and its advice to the Corporation, other than any advice which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis, shall be published on the College's website and shall be made available for inspection at the College by any person during normal office hours.
- (5) The Corporation shall review regularly all material excluded from inspection under article 5(4) and shall make any such material available for inspection where it is satisfied that the reason for dealing with the matter on a confidential basis no longer applies, or where it considers that the public interest in disclosure outweighs that reason.

6. The Audit and Risk Committee

- (1) The Corporation shall establish a committee, to be known as the "Audit and Risk Committee", to advise on matters relating to the Corporation's audit arrangements and systems of internal control.
- (2) The Audit and Risk Committee shall consist of at least three persons and should not include members of staff at the College including those in senior posts.

7. Composition of committees

Any committee established by the Corporation, other than the committee referred to in article 6, may include persons who are not members of the Corporation.

8. Access to committees by non-members and publication of minutes

The Corporation shall ensure that:

- (a) a written statement of its policy regarding attendance at committee meetings by persons who are not committee members; and
- (b) the minutes of committee meetings, if they have been approved by the Chair of the meeting, are published on the College's website and made available for inspection at the College by any person, during normal office hours.

9. Delegable and non-delegable functions

- (1) The Corporation shall not delegate the following functions:
 - (a) the determination of the educational character and mission of the College;
 - (b) the approval of the annual estimates of income and expenditure;
 - (c) the responsibility for ensuring the solvency of the College and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets;
 - (d) the appointment of the Principal or holder of a senior post;
 - (e) the appointment of the Director of Governance, (including, where the Director of Governance is, or is to be, appointed as a member of staff the Director of Governance's appointment in the capacity of a member of staff); and
 - (f) the modification or revocation of these Articles.
- (2) The Corporation may not delegate:
 - (a) the consideration of the case for dismissal, and
 - (b) the power to determine an appeal in connection with the dismissal of the Principal, the Director of Governance or the holder of a senior post, other than to a committee of members of the Corporation.

- (3) The Corporation shall make rules specifying the way in which a committee having functions under article 9(2)(b) shall be established and conducted.
- (4) The Principal may delegate functions to the holder of any other senior post other than:
 - (a) the management of budget and resources; and
 - (b) any functions that have been delegated to the Principal by the Corporation.

10. Appointment and promotion of staff

- (1) Where there is a vacancy or expected vacancy in a senior post, the Corporation shall:
 - (a) advertise the vacancy nationally; and
 - (b) appoint a selection panel consisting of:
 - i. at least five members of the Corporation including the Chair or the Vice-Chair or both, where the vacancy is for the post of Principal ; or
 - ii. the Principal and at least three other members of the Corporation, where the vacancy is for any other senior post.
- (2) The members of the selection panel shall:
 - (a) decide on the arrangements for selecting the applicants for interview;
 - (b) interview the applicants; and
 - (c) where they consider it appropriate to do so, recommend to the Corporation for appointment one of the applicants they have interviewed.
- (3) If the Corporation approves the recommendation of the selection panel, that person shall be appointed.
- (4) If the members of the selection panel are unable to agree on a person to recommend to the Corporation, or if the Corporation does not approve their recommendation, the Corporation may make an appointment itself of a person from amongst those interviewed, or it may require the panel to repeat the steps specified in article 10(2), with or without first re-advertising the vacancy.
- (5) Where there is a vacancy in a senior post or where the holder of a senior post is temporarily absent, until that post is filled or the absent post holder returns, a member of staff:
 - (a) may be required to act as Principal or in the place of any other senior post holder; and
 - (b) if so required, shall have all the duties and responsibilities of the Principal or such other senior post holder during the period of the vacancy or temporary absence.
- (6) The Principal shall have responsibility for selecting for appointment all members of staff other than:
 - (a) senior post holders; and
 - (b) where the Director of Governance is also to be appointed as a member of staff, the Director of Governance in the role of a member of staff.

11. Rules relating to the conduct of staff

After consultation with the staff, the Corporation shall make rules relating to their conduct.

12. Academic freedom

In making rules under article 11, the Corporation shall have regard to the need to ensure that academic staff at the College have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without putting themselves at risk of losing their jobs or any privileges which they may enjoy at the College.

13. Grievance, suspension and disciplinary procedures

- (1) After consultation with staff, the Corporation shall make rules setting out
 - (a) grievance procedures for all staff;
 - (b) procedures for the suspension of all staff; and
 - (c) disciplinary and dismissal procedures for
 - i. senior post-holders, and
 - ii. staff other than senior post-holdersand such procedures shall be subject to the provisions of articles 3(1)(f), 3(2)(e), 9(1)(d), 9(1)(e), 9(2) and 14.
- (2) Any rules made under article 13(1)(b) shall include provision that where a person has been suspended without pay, any appeal against such suspension shall be heard and action taken in a timely manner.
- (3) Any rules made under article 13(1)(c)(i) shall include provision that where the Corporation considers that it may be appropriate to dismiss a person, a preliminary investigation shall be conducted to examine and determine the case for dismissal.

14. Suspension and dismissal of the Director of Governance

- (1) Where the Director of Governance is also a member of staff at the College, the Director of Governance is to be treated as a senior post holder for the purposes of article 13(1)(c).
- (2) Where the Director of Governance is suspended or dismissed under article 13, that suspension or dismissal shall not affect the position of the Director of Governance in the separate role of Director of Governance to the Corporation.

15. Students

- (1) Any students' union shall conduct and manage its own affairs and funds in accordance with a constitution approved by the Corporation and no amendment to, or rescission of, that constitution, in part or in whole, shall be valid unless approved by the Corporation.
- (2) The students' union shall present audited accounts annually to the Corporation.
- (3) After consultation with representatives of the students, the Corporation shall make rules concerning the conduct of students, including procedures for their suspension and expulsion (including expulsion for an unsatisfactory standard of work or other academic reason).

16. Financial matters

The Corporation shall set the policy by which the tuition and other fees payable to it are determined, subject to any terms and conditions attached to grants, loans or other payments paid or made by the ESFA.

17. Internal audit

- (1) The Corporation shall, at such times as it considers appropriate, examine and evaluate its systems of internal financial and other control to ensure that they contribute to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of the Corporation's resources.
- (2) The Corporation may arrange for the examination and evaluation mentioned in clause 17(1) to be carried out on its behalf by internal auditors.
- (3) The Corporation shall not appoint persons as internal auditors to carry out activities referred to in article 17(1) if those persons are already appointed as external auditors under article 18.

18. Accounts and audit of accounts

- (1) The Corporation shall:

- (a) keep proper accounts and proper records in relation to the accounts; and
 - (b) prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year of the Corporation.
- (2) The statement shall:
- (a) give a true and fair account of the state of the Corporation's affairs at the end of the financial year and of its income and expenditure in the financial year; and
 - (b) comply with any directions given by ESFA as to the information to be contained in it, the manner in which the information is to be presented, the methods and principles according to which it is to be prepared and the time and manner of publication.
- (3) The accounts and the statement of accounts shall be audited by external auditors appointed by the Corporation in respect of each financial year.
- (4) Auditors shall be appointed and audit work conducted in accordance with any requirements of the ESFA.
- (5) The "financial year" means the first financial year and, except as provided for in article 18(7), each successive period of twelve months.
- (6) The "first financial year" means the period from the date the Corporation was established up to the second 31st July following that date, or up to some other date which has been chosen by the Corporation with the ESFA approval.
- (7) If the Corporation is dissolved:
- (a) the last financial year shall end on the date of dissolution; and
 - (b) the Corporation may decide, with the ESFA approval, that what would otherwise be the last two financial years, shall be a single financial year for the purpose of this article.

19. Rules and bye-laws

The Corporation shall have the power to make rules and bye-laws relating to the government and conduct of the College and these rules and bye-laws shall be subject to the provisions of the Instrument of Government and these Articles.

20. Copies of Articles of Government and rules and bye-laws

A copy of these Articles, and of any rules and bye-laws, shall be given free of charge to every member of the Corporation and at a charge not exceeding the cost of copying or free of charge, to any other person who requests a copy and shall be available for inspection at the College upon request, during normal office hours, to every member of staff and every student.

21. Modification or replacement of the Instrument and Articles of Government

- (1) Subject to article 21(2), the Corporation may by resolution of the members modify or replace its instrument and articles of government, after consultation with any other persons who, in the Corporation's view, are likely to be affected by the proposed changes.
- (2) The Corporation shall not make changes to the instrument or articles of the government that would result in the body ceasing to be a charity.

22. Dissolution of the Corporation

- (1) The Corporation may by resolution dissolve itself and provide for the transfer of its property, right and liabilities.
- (2) The Corporation shall ensure that a copy of the draft resolution to dissolve the Corporation on a specified date shall be published at least one month before the proposed date of such resolution.