

### What you need to do

As an individual governor you must do the following.

- 1 Act in line with the seven principles of public life (see page 7).
- 2 Identify your own skills, ideas, experiences and knowledge and work out how to transfer them to an educational setting.
- 3 Recognise your own ignorance about the changes in education and develop new skills and knowledge to keep up to date.
- 4 Take an active interest in the work of the College.
- 5 Review the skills, knowledge, experience and work of the governing body every year.
- 6 Respect the authority, roles and structures of the governing body and the College, and the rules on confidentiality.
- 7 Make sure that you have enough information and advice to make the best decisions possible.
- 8 Balance and make use of different viewpoints when making sense of a situation.
- 9 Where there is not enough information, or it is conflicting or not clear, make sure that you take effective action to deal with this.
- 10 Work effectively with other governors to take decisions through analysing risks, assessing options and being aware of the consequences.
- 11 Agree decisions that are:
  - In line with the College's best interests;
  - In time for appropriate action to be taken; and
  - Communicated to those who need to know.
- 12 Accept corporate responsibility for decisions taken by the governing body, even when you do not agree with them.
- 13 Check that the minutes of the governing body's work adequately record the thinking behind the decisions taken.
- 14 Where necessary authorise the chair to act on behalf of the governing body between meetings.

### What you need access to

To be able to carry out your responsibilities as a governor, you will need access to the following:

- The instrument and articles of government.
- Any regulations, standing orders and bylaws that affect the governing body.
- Advice from the clerk on issues of principle and procedure.

### What you need to know

You will also need to know and understand the following:

- The seven principles of public life – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- The role of the chair in leading the work of the governing body.
- The role of the clerk in supporting the work of the governing body.
- The role of the principal in managing the day-to-day operations of the College.
- The rules of procedure for meetings (for example, how often they are held, the minimum number of members, confidentiality, access to minutes and attendance of advisers).
- The role of committees and what business is given to them.
- The code of conduct for governors, including the policy on governors' travel, meals and accommodation.

### How you might need to behave

You will need these personal qualities and behaviours to carry out your role effectively.

- You identify and raise ethical issues, cope with ambiguity and confront difficult questions.  
You say something when you think one interest group is acting in a way that reduces the opportunity for other less powerful groups.
- You resist pressures from other governors or managers to achieve results by any means.  
You think it is important that, even if everyone appears to agree with a particular action, someone is prepared to question why everyone agrees – why are we doing it like this?
- You are aware of your own personal interests and can separate these from your role.  
You call attention to any occasions when your own or others' personal interests affect the work of the governing body or their advisers.
- You recognise that there are dilemmas at the heart of the role of the governing body.  
You accept that there are no absolute 'right ways' of doing things. The demands on Colleges and responses to these demands change over time.
- You act in an assured and unhesitating way when faced with a challenge.  
Your first response is to think before acting.
- You maintain your beliefs, commitment and effort in spite of setbacks or opposition.  
You can show stamina when faced with difficult challenges without being stubborn or too assertive.
- You work with other governors to develop creative and appropriate solutions.  
You take account of the views of others, recognising that the governing body needs to act together to exercise its authority.
- You solve problems by trying to find new approaches thinking creatively and balancing rational thought and emotion.  
You avoid taking 'kneejerk' decisions. You want to know what is going on to understand what is happening and why. You investigate in a way that pays attention to the feelings of those involved.
- You understand and are sympathetic to the wishes and ambitions of students.