

## East Sussex College Group

### Governor Recruitment and Succession Planning Policy

#### Background

This policy applies to all Governors. Its purpose is to ensure a good standard of Governor recruitment and succession planning.

#### Policy Statement

The East Sussex College Group aims to keep a balance between refreshing its membership and maintaining experience, knowledge and skills to have the right people on board to fulfil the organisation's strategy and goals. It will keep its recruitment, membership and succession under regular review for these purposes.

As part of East Sussex College Group vision to be the learning provider of choice for East Sussex, the ESCG Board is committed to reflecting the diversity of people and communities the organisation serves. This is to ensure it has the breadth of insight and experience needed to govern a genuinely inclusive and prosperous organisation. As part of the Board's Recruitment and Succession Planning Policy governors will be drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, with an appropriate balance of skills, gender, race and ethnicity, age, disability, religion and sexual orientation sought.

East Sussex College Group is committed to forward planning and ensuring by effective succession planning that it is always in a position where there is an effective functioning Board to ensure continuity of College leadership of the highest quality.

This policy document sets out how this intention will be put into practice and will itself be kept under review.

#### Governor Recruitment, Selection and Assessment

- The Director of Governance will maintain a Board Composition Register that provides details of current membership, including categories of membership and terms of office. This will be used by the Director of Governance to ensure that forthcoming vacancies due as a result of the term of office of a Governor being due to expire are reported to the Governance Development Committee on a timely basis.
- A member may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Director of Governance to the Board. All Governors will be encouraged at their induction meeting to provide sufficient notice of resignation to allow for vacancies resulting from resignation to be reported to the Governance Development Committee promptly.
- The Governance Development Committee will, at each meeting, review the membership position, vacancies and any future dates at which there may be changes to crucial offices such as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board and Committee Chairs.

- A file will be maintained of Governors' Curriculum Vitae and / or application forms providing details of individual skills, backgrounds, offices held and any other relevant information.
- All Governors will be asked to complete a skills audit as part of their application form to be a Governor and to update it at their induction meeting, and again every year. The Director of Governance will use this information to undertake an analysis of the current skills on the Board at periods of no longer than two years.
- The Governance Development Committee will be provided with details of the latest skills audit analysis so that they may match the skills and experience of candidates, as set out in their application forms, to any skills gaps that may exist on the Board at the time of a particular vacancy.
- The Governance Development Committee will consider the skills, experience, background and personal characteristics which are desirable to be met in filling any vacancy. Consideration will be given to identifying potential future leaders from within the ESCG Board membership, as well as the possibility of new recruitment to fill a future Committee Chair vacancy.
- The Governance Development Committee will pursue possibilities for new Governors based on this needs assessment. Personal contacts, advertising, approaches to professional, trade or community organisations and local businesses and employers, the use of volunteer bureaux and Governor recruitment agencies will all be considered for use. The Governance Development Committee will agree on the method or methods most appropriate for the vacancy.
- To ensure positive recruitment practice and to increase the diversity of the Board, any advertisement for Governors will specify the skills and benefits of being a member and include clear messages indicating that the College strongly encourages applications from all sections of the community.
- Information about becoming a Governor will be kept up to date and will be available on the College website and provided to those interested in becoming a Governor.
- Anyone interested in joining the ESCG Board as an Independent Governor, or a co-opted member of members of the Local College Board, will be asked to submit an expression of interest.
- All expressions of interest should be assessed by at least three members of the Governance Development Committee (including the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Committee. The Director of Governance should support the process).
- Interviews for Independent Governors will be called by a Panel comprising three Members of the Governance Development Committee (including the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Governance Development Committee, supported by the Director of Governance). Appointments are subject to approval by the ESCG Board.
- Interviews for Local College Board membership will be called by a Panel comprising the Local College Board Chair and College Principal. They should nominate suitable members of the College Board as required. Appointments are subject to approval by the ESCG Board. An individual may not be appointed to the College Board if they

would be ineligible for membership of the ESCG Board under the Instrument & Articles of Government. Members shall be required to declare their eligibility in a form prescribed by the Director of Governance.

- Interviews for Co-opted Members will be called by a Panel comprising the Committee Chair and the Executive Officer of the Committee. They should nominate suitable members of the Committee as required. Appointments are subject to approval by the ESCG Board.
- Arrangements for staff and student governor elections are set out in 4.2 of the East Sussex College Group Standing Orders.

### **Induction**

- All new Governors will be provided with a comprehensive induction to the role via the Director of Governance, who will also make arrangements for separate induction meetings with the ESCG Chair, the CEO and other members of the Executive Team, as appropriate to provide an induction into the College.
- Further specific induction training will be provided to Staff and Student Governors, tailored to their needs.
- A new Governor will be asked if they wish to have a named Governor who will be available as a mentor to give peer support for their first year. Student Governors will always be mentored by an existing Governor, as well as supported by the Director of Governance.
- New Governors will be offered the opportunity to have a six-month review meeting or telephone discussion with the ESCG Chair.

### **Training and development**

- The Skills Audit undertaken on appointment will identify potential areas of development.
- Governors will also be asked to consider their training requirements as part of the annual appraisal programme. Feedback will be evaluated and used to inform the annual programme of training and events.
- An annual programme of activities for Governor training will be prepared by the Director of Governance, in consultation with the ESCG Chair and the CEO, and agreed by the ESCG Board.
- Governors are encouraged to attend and engage in College activities and events to increase their knowledge of the College and its work. Regular information on such will be emailed via the Director of Governance to the ESCG Board.
- The Director of Governance, CEO, and Chair of the ESCG Board shall discuss the value for money of attendance by Governors at external events, seminars and other training and development activities provided by other organisations and arrangements will be made for attendance and travel as appropriate.

- The Director of Governance will disseminate learning and development opportunities, relevant sector briefings and information from external organisations including the Association of Colleges (AoC) and Government agencies to Governors as appropriate.

### **Succession Planning and Business Continuity, supported by Self-Assessment**

- The Governance Development Committee will consider succession planning at every meeting.
- The expiry dates of terms of office of existing Governors are staggered to assist effective succession planning and to reduce the number of forthcoming vacancies at any particular time.
- A Standing Order is in place to limit the number of consecutive terms of office a Governor may undertake. This ensures that independence is maintained and assists the aim of having a balance of new and experienced Governors.
- A Standing Order exists for the nomination and election process for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair/s.
- A Governor may at any time resign his/her office by notice of writing to the Director of Governance.
- Where a future Committee Chairing vacancy has been identified, opportunities for shadowing by, and mentoring of, a prospective future Chair, to allow for development and knowledge sharing before an office is taken up will be considered.
- The Governance Development Committee will keep under review the determination of membership of the Board, including the composition of Committees. Recommendations will be submitted to the ESCG Board accordingly.
- A Special Meeting of the Governance Development Committee will be convened by the Chair of the Committee (or in their absence the Vice-Chair/s of the Committee) as a matter of urgency, to consider any unforeseen vacancies arising where it would not be expedient to delay such until the next ordinary scheduled meeting, e.g. two or more Governors resigning at short notice.
- The ESCG Board collectively will undertake self-assessment annually, including assessing against expectations for effective governance. As part of this assessment, any succession issues and activity to address them will be identified.
- Each Governor will annually participate in the Governor appraisal programme. The meeting will include an opportunity to identify how the Governor would like to develop their role and their aspirations as a Governor and what support to develop would be useful. Individual one to one outcomes will be used to contribute to the annual ESCG Board self-assessment.

Version	Effective from	Summary of change	Prepared by	Approved by
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1	26.3.19	First version	Directors of Governance	ESCG Board
2	8.07.20	Revised to include recruitment elements	Director of Governance	ESCG Board

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