QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Governance SAR
2020/21

KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To provide outstanding governance in the achievement of the College's key strategic goals:

1. Consistently deliver a high quality learning experience and environment
2. Further develop and grow our partnerships and engagement. Securing the best possible education and training for our community
3. Innovate and continuously improve our curriculum offer
4. Develop the business to ensure we are future proof and financially sustainable
5. Continually develop and invest in our people and teams, supporting learners and staff to be active partners in our work

BOARD KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The key performance indicators are as follows:

1. All members of the Corporation meet the performance indicators determined by its standing orders

2. There is evidenced quality improvement in governance through participation in the Governor Development & Improvement programme, training and strategic planning events, leading to greater understanding and challenge of key issues facing the College

3. The composition of Board membership ensures the right skills mix to ensure effective support and challenge is in place and that high aspirations are set for what learners can expect from the college

4. Teaching, learning & assessment is prioritised by the Board and scrutiny of the learner experience in both further and higher education provision is informed and thorough

5. The Board ensures controls and financial management are robust

6. The Board is able to monitor and hold senior management to account for the achievement of corporate objectives

7. The Board is able to make timely strategic decisions

8. The Board ensures that risk is proactively managed and monitored within the College

9. The Board fulfils its statutory duties and regulatory responsibilities

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

Self-assessment of Kendal College Corporation's performance during 2020/2021 has been based on a range of activities including individual governor review, review of the board's overall performance, compliance with standing orders and committee terms of reference, as well as the English College's Code of Good Governance. The aim of board self-assessment is to contribute to the leadership and management section of the overall College self-assessment and also to allow reflection on what works well and how the Board can continuously improve. Board members take part in the college SAR validation and formally approve the SAR at their December board meeting.

This year has again been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in a reliance on virtual meetings for both corporation and committee meetings and reducing the direct way the Board has been able to operate and support the Principal and Senior Leadership Team. Governors have not been able to visit the college either as part of their own development or to meet with staff and students.

Set up last academic year in response to the pandemic and to provide close scrutiny and monitoring of the college's response to the pandemic with a particular focus on finance, the Finance & Resources Working Group met on a regular basis, bringing together a mixture of governors, including an additional co-opted accountant, and senior leaders. The group was able to provide the board with additional assurance that the college was effectively managing its finances and was able to respond to the changing guidance in respect of providing safe services to students and a safe working environment for staff.

Whilst face-to-face meetings were not possible, the usual business of governance was little impacted through robust decision-making over some key areas and projects such as Newton Rigg, capital build projects, the appointment of new governors, a senior finance director and the retirement of the Chair. Cath Dutton had been a member of the board since 2002, taking over the role of chair in 2014.

Seeking retirement earlier than 2021, Cath's tenure was extended to provide continuous support through the pandemic. She was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday honours to recognise her services to education and the local community. Through good succession planning, the Board was able to appoint Jon Thedham, previously vice chair, to the role and equally able to fill vacant positions for Vice Chair and Committee chairs. New governor appointments were made including for student governors and independent governors with robust application and appointment processes. It was good to be able to meet new governors face to face at Cath's retirement event in July 2021.

The Board continues to strive for outstanding performance and continuous improvement of the learner experience. Routine monitoring of student satisfaction and learner achievements were incorporated into the quality cycle and endorsed through assurances provided by three student governors. Data presented was inevitably impacted by the pandemic and the emphasis moved to ensuring that the student experience was upheld through high quality on-line teaching and seeking assurance that centre assessed grading was carried out in line with awarding body expectations.

An on-line Strategic Planning event was held in January 2020, with its central theme the FE Skills White Paper. An external facilitator from AoC spoke to the paper and allowed governors the chance to review its impact through breakout groups.

The governor training event was cancelled but some governors used the opportunity to access e-learning provided by AoC and ETF including induction training for new Governors and webinars addressing the impact of Covid-19. Governors also had sight of the AoC briefings.

Governors have undertaken one-to-one performance reviews with the Corporation Chair to establish their own development needs, willingness to take on committee responsibility and to reflect on the effectiveness of the board. Whilst it has been a difficult year, all governors have commented positively on how the board has operated and the skills of the Chair.

Areas of development identified through the board survey referred in the main to developing closer links between reporting and strategic priorities, providing more access for governors to both staff and students and suggesting that the board moves from a role of support to one of increased scrutiny and challenge in the post pandemic period.

Committees have been effective this year and have met their responsibilities under their terms of reference and scheme of delegation. Each of the committees now produce an annual report that reflects on their work and is shared with the main board.   Search & Governance Committee has continued to monitor membership and advise on recruitment based on the updated skills audit.   The committee also met its terms of reference and delegated responsibilities, as summarised in the annual Search & Governance Committee report. The Remuneration Committee did not meet during the year but will re-convene in the Autumn term.

Summary of Strengths and Areas for Development

Key strengths:

- Skills and expertise of governors to challenge and support senior leaders

- Well informed and highly committed Board in place to shape strategic direction

- Open and honest working relationship established with the Principal and senior team

- Highly responsive support to Principal and senior team for Covid-19

Key Areas for Development:

- Maintaining of strategic focus and more regular review through linking of strategic priorities within reports

- Re-establish a strong governor development and improvement programme through an effective link governor scheme

- A programme of governor access to support skills and experience

- Board Review process

	QUALITY STANDARD	STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT	EVIDENCE BASE
20/21-1	All members of the Corporation meet the performance indicators determined by its standing orders	1. Full independent membership achieved with 3 new members recruited during the year 2. 2 additional student governors recruited 3. Well informed and strongly committed board for improving the quality of learning 4. Succession planning in place to ensuring continuity of chair's role		1. Board membership 2. A&R and S&G committee minutes 3. Board appraisal outcomes
	QUALITY STANDARD	**STRENGTHS**	**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**	**EVIDENCE BASE**
20/21-2	There is evidenced quality improvement in governance through participation in the governor development & improvement programme, training and strategic planning events leading to greater understanding and challenge of key issues facing the College	1. Range of governor training materials shared through the Governor Development & Improvement programme	1. Revisit governor development & improvement programme post Covid-19 2. Look at requirements of 3 year governor review process 3. New Code of Good Governance compliance 4. Strategic planning event 2022 5. Training event 2022	1. Governor appraisal outcomes 2. GD&IP 2021/22 3. Programme for strategic planning and training events
	QUALITY STANDARD	**STRENGTHS**	**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**	**EVIDENCE BASE**
20/21-3	The composition of Board membership ensures the right skills mix to ensure effective support and challenge is in place and that high aspirations are set for what learners can expect from the college	1. Governors include those with substantial experience of FE/education and finance who are able to provide strong challenge across all areas 2. Governors have strong collaborative links with key industries eg for apprenticeships 3. High level of commitment to shaping the strategic direction of the college 4. Open and honest relationship with principal and senior leaders 5. 3 students governors in place to provide student perspective to board	1. Challenge and scrutiny of board reports 2. Student voice	1. S&G Minutes 2. Succession Planning process 3. Strategic plan 4. Governor Skills audit
	QUALITY STANDARD	**STRENGTHS**	**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**	**EVIDENCE BASE**
20/21-4	Teaching, learning & assessment is prioritised by the Board and scrutiny of the learner experience in both further and higher education provision is informed and thorough	1. Prioritisation of Teaching, Learning & Assessment at Board meetings 2. Robust challenge of areas where performance does not meet target eg attendance at maths and English	1. Closer link between reports and strategic priorities	1. Board meeting minutes
	QUALITY STANDARD	**STRENGTHS**	**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**	**EVIDENCE BASE**
20/21-5	The Board ensures controls and financial management are robust	1. High level of expertise on the Board and through committee structure provides robust scrutiny of management accounts 2. Highly effective use of internal audit to monitor controls 3. Financial health score (good) closely monitored via ESFA performance dashboard 4. Comprehensive risk register in place incorporating 3 levels of assurance	1. Training of new governors in finance and funding 2. Continuation of development of risk appetite and tolerance 3. Board reporting through PowerBI tools	1. Minutes of Board meetings 2. Risk register 3. Training log

	QUALITY STANDARD	STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT	EVIDENCE BASE
		5. Board training in assurance 6. Finance & resources working group monitoring of finance during Covid-19		

	QUALITY STANDARD	STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	EVIDENCE BASE
20/21-6	The Board is able to monitor and hold senior management to account for the achievement of corporate objectives	1. Level of skill and expertise on the Board 2.	1. Better referencing of links to strategic priorities via board papers 2. Use of comprehensive data dashboard to highlight achievement of KPIs	1. Minutes of board meetings 2. Principal's report and data dashboard

Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22

Ref	Underpinning Objective/ Area for Improvement	Performance Indicator	Actions	By Whom	By When	Update Position
21/22-1	Governor training and access to college	All governors are able to visit the college and evidence participation in the governor development & improvement programme 2021/22	1. Re-establish the governor link scheme including presentations at board meetings 2. Programme for training event captures identified development needs 3. Programme of visits and events to be established	SLT CD	December 2021	
21/22-2	3 year board review	Review process is in place and board receives a high rated grade	4. Establish criteria for reviews 5. Follow guidance to set up for 2022/23 6. Request budget allowance for review 7. Prepare board and processes ahead of review	CD	December 2022	
21/22-3	Compliance with new Code of Good Governance	The board is fully compliant with the requirements and expectations of the code	1. Set up review process against new code 2. Identify areas of potential non-compliance	CD	June 2022	

Ref	Underpinning Objective/ Area for Improvement	Performance Indicator	Actions	By Whom	By When	Update Position
			3. Put in place new processes to ensure evidence of "must" requirements 4. Review processes to meet "should" requirements			
21/22-4	Strategic priority reporting	There is clear evidence of reporting against the college's strategic priorities	1. All board reports to have a clear link to college strategic priorities 2. Mapping of reports against strategic priorities 3. Timetable of reporting to board on progress against strategic priorities	SLT CD/SLT KN	January 2022	
21/22-5	Risk management processes are understood and embedded	The process of risk management including risk appetite and tolerance is applied to all new projects and high risk areas	1. A&R committee to confirm processes for allocating risk appetite and tolerance 2. Processes for risk management to be shared with board and applied to projects 3. Risk to be better monitored by board	A&R SLT Board	March 22	