# The Corporation of New College Durham 

## Standing Orders

## of the Corporation and Committees

Approved by Corporation on 6 July 2023

## The Corporation of New College Durham

## Standing Orders of the Corporation and Committees

## Interpretation

1. Rules specified for the working of the Corporation shall be interpreted, where applicable, for committees also.
2. The terms "Corporation" and "Corporation member" are used interchangeably with "Board", "Governing Body" and "Governor".

## Introduction

3. Nothing in this document is meant to override the provisions of the Instrument and Articles of Government of New College Durham which at all times are to be regarded as primary sources of guidance.
4. It is the responsibility of the Corporation Secretary to interpret the following documents and to advise the Corporation/Chair of the Corporation if at any time it appears that the Corporation or an individual Corporation member is in breach of, or in danger of becoming in breach of, the regulations contained within:

- Instrument and Articles of Government
- Standing Orders for the conduct of meetings and related issues
- Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members
- Terms of Reference for the Committees of the Corporation
- Conflicts of Interest Policy

5. In all matters a Vice Chair has the authority to act for the Chair should the Chair be unavailable through absence or incapacity.

## Membership

## Appointment

6. A member of the Corporation shall be appointed by the Corporation on the recommendation of the Search committee, or in the case of Staff and Student Governors following election, for a fixed term of office not exceeding 4 years.
7. A member may be re-appointed for a further term/s of office on the recommendation of, and subject to a review of that member's contribution to the work of the Governing Body by the Search Committee.
8. Staff Governors will be appointed for a fixed term of 3 years and may seek re-election for a further 3 years, serving a maximum of two consecutive terms of office.
9. The usual term of service for a governor will not exceed 8 years. However, where continuous service beyond this period is of particular value to the Corporation (eg. to ensure continuity, to ensure the Board has members with necessary skills) then such re-appointment may be made.

## Eligibility

10. The eligibility or continued membership of a member shall be subject to the restrictions imposed by Sections 8 and 10 of the Instrument of Government, including reasons for automatic disqualification of charity trustees. Members will be required to confirm their eligibility to serve on appointment and annually throughout their term of office. The automatic disqualification rules for charity trustees are set out in Appendix 4.

## Composition

11. The Corporation will seek to have a membership with a wide range of relevant skills and expertise that will aim to reflect the diversity of the community it serves.
12. The composition of the Corporation shall be determined by the Corporation, having regard to the Instrument of Government and the recommendations of the Search Committee. For current composition see Appendix 1.

## Attendance by members at meetings

13. Members have been appointed in the expectation that they will participate fully in the work of the Corporation and in the life of the College. A high level of attendance and adequate preparation for meetings is therefore expected. It is appreciated that members have other demands on their time and thus there may be occasions when it is not possible to attend a meeting. Members intending to attend any meetings of the Corporation or its committees by remote means, as an exception, will notify the Corporation Secretary at the earliest opportunity.

13a. The Corporation has set a target of $75 \%$ attendance at all Corporation and committee meetings in any year. Participating by remote means as defined in the Instrument of Government e.g. by means telephone or video-conferencing facilities or similar communications equipment whereby all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other, shall be counted as full attendance. The Corporation Secretary will maintain a register of attendance by individual Board members and this will be kept under review by the Search Committee and reported on annually to the Board and in the annual accounts.
14. The Instrument of Government provides in Clause 10 for the Corporation to consider removal from office of a Governor if he/she has been absent from meetings for a period longer than 6 months without the permission of Corporation. It is important, therefore, that apologies for absence are submitted so that, in the event of an absence of 6 months, the Board can determine whether removal from membership is justified however the communication and formal recording of apologies will not be considered as giving permission for absence. In the light of individual circumstance it may be appropriate for the Corporation to grant leave of absence to a member from their duties as a governor.
15. Members who anticipate difficulty in attending meetings over a period of time are requested to discuss their position with the Corporation Secretary as soon as possible.

## Expenses

16. The scheme for the payment of expenses to governors, for costs incurred as a result of their membership of the Corporation, is detailed in Appendix 2.

## Committees

17. The main responsibilities of the Corporation are set out at Appendix 3 of the Code of Conduct, as are those responsibilities of the Governing Body which may not be delegated. Subject to this the Corporation may establish a committee for any purpose or function other than those assigned elsewhere to the Principal. The Corporation may delegate powers to such a committee.
18. Under the terms of Articles 5 and 6, the Corporation must establish both a Search Committee, to advise on the appointment of members to the Governing Body, and an Audit and Risk Committee, to advise on matters relating to the Corporation's audit arrangements and systems of internal control.
19. Each committee shall have its terms or reference, composition, quorum and membership agreed by the Corporation.
20. Generally committees shall meet at least once each term. The Remuneration Committee and the Search Committee shall meet as appropriate.
21. Any committee established by the Corporation may include amongst its members persons who are not members of the Corporation (co-opted members). Co-opted members shall be appointed for a specified term and shall be eligible for re-appointment by the Corporation, subject to recommendation by the Search Committee.
22. The Corporation shall appoint a chair from amongst the Corporation members of the committee in accordance with standing order 49. The committee chair shall act as the key link between the committee and the Corporation, making a report (verbally or in writing) to each Corporation meeting and being available to respond, on behalf of the committee, to questions concerning the work of that committee.
23. Committee chairs may invite members of College staff and other persons with relevant expertise or interest to attend committee meetings as observers, and to contribute to the meeting as appropriate.

## Special Committee

24. A Special Committee of the Corporation may be convened under Article 10 and in accordance with the College Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Postholders and Corporation Secretary. The members of the Special Committee shall be appointed at such time as the committee is convened. If the decision to convene a Special Committee is made by the Corporation, the members of the Special Committee shall be appointed by the Corporation. Where the decision to convene a Special Committee is made by the Chair, or in the Chair's absence of incapacity, a Vice Chair, the members shall be appointed by the Chair, or Vice Chair(s), in consultation with the Corporation Secretary. In making such appointment consideration shall be given to the need for early resolution of any matters raised before a Special Committee and the need for the committee's enquiry to be, and be seen to be, totally impartial. The Corporation Secretary will provide clerking support to this committee.

## Appeals Committees

25. In cases where an internal policy of the College allows an appeal to the Corporation and such an appeal is lodged with the Corporation Secretary,
unless prohibited by Article 10, a committee shall be convened and members appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Corporation Secretary. The Corporation Chair shall not be a member of such a committee but may attend in an advisory capacity if requested by the committee chair. In making such appointments, consideration shall be given to the need for early resolution of such appeals and for the need for such an appeal committee's hearing to be, and be seen to be, totally impartial. The Corporation Secretary will provide clerking support to this committee.

## Meetings

## Quorum

26. Quorum for Corporation meetings is $40 \%$ of the total number of members in office from time to time, not including vacancies (see Appendix 1).
27. Quorum for committees shall be established by the Corporation and detailed in each committee's terms of reference.
28. Where a meeting is, or becomes, inquorate, no decisions can be taken. An inquorate meeting can be advisory only.
29. In the event that Student or Staff Governors form the majority of a quorum for Committee meetings, the meeting will not be inquorate however, if a decision is required on any particular agenda item, the Chair may defer that item to the following Committee meeting or refer the matter to Corporation.
30. To avoid the difficulties arising from inquorate meetings, wherever possible, members should notify the Corporation Secretary well in advance of any scheduled meeting if they are unable to be present.

## Voting

31. Every question to be decided at a meeting of the Corporation shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting. Voting may be by show of hands or by secret ballot. Members may not vote by proxy. Where members present are clearly unanimous on any question requiring a decision then, at the Chair's discretion, a decision may be made by general assent and no vote taken. Where any member requires a vote to be taken, this shall be done. Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second, casting, vote.
32. No decision of the Corporation 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.
33. The withdrawal of members (staff and student) for specific items of business is governed by Clause 14 of the Instrument of Government.
34. Declaration of interest and withdrawal from debate and voting is covered by Clause 7 of the Code of Conduct and the Conflicts of Interest Policy. However there may be occasions where a member should declare a lesser interest eg membership of an outside body, or previous knowledge of a party under discussion, which relates to the matter under debate but would not be likely to interfere with the member's independent judgement. In these cases it will be a matter for decision for the members present, advised by the Corporation Secretary, whether or not that member should withdraw, refrain from taking part in the debate or refrain from voting.

## Debate and proceedings at meetings

35. The length of Board and Committee meetings will normally be limited to 2 hours and every effort will be made to manage meetings efficiently through presentation of papers, agenda and Chairing. Papers will be presented on the basis that members have already read the documents with only key points highlighted at the meeting, allowing time for member discussion and debate.
36. All members are entitled to speak on any item on the Agenda, subject to restrictions imposed by a declaration of interest or exclusion identified in the Instrument of Government. Members may decide to limit individual contributions to the debate to a specified time limit, in which case such restriction shall apply equally to all members save the Chair of the meeting.
37. Subject to the above, debate will be subject to the overall control of the Chair of the meeting whose decision shall be final.
38. Rules for individual member's contribution to debate are covered within the Governors Code of Conduct.

## Meetings cycle

39. A meeting of the Corporation shall be held at least once in each term. An annual list of meeting dates and business to be conducted shall be issued prior to the commencement of the academic year.
40. A special meeting of the Corporation may be called at any time by the Chair or at the request in writing, to the Corporation Secretary, of any five members. Where the Chair, or in the Chair's absence, a 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 seven calendar days (Clause12(5) Instrument of Government).

## Agendas

41. Agendas and, wherever possible, supporting papers shall be issued by the Corporation Secretary (in consultation with the Chair and the Principal) a minimum of seven days prior to the meeting by post or electronically.
42. Any member wishing to bring an item of business to the meeting shall notify the Corporation Secretary not less than 14 days prior to the meeting.
43. The item 'Any other urgent business' on the meeting Agenda shall only be used, with the consent of the Chair or of a majority of members present, for important issues that have arisen after the issue of the Agenda.
44. In certain circumstances starred agenda items may be used to improve the efficiency of meetings and decision making. The Chair will ask at the start of the meeting whether members wish to discuss any of the starred agenda items, otherwise it will be assumed that Corporation or Committees have agreed them. The decision to star an agenda item will be made by the Chair when agreeing the agenda.

## Chair and Vice Chair(s)

45. The Chair of the Corporation shall chair all Governing Body meetings. In the Chair's absence a Vice Chair shall carry out this duty. In the absence of both Chair and Vice Chair(s) the members present shall appoint one of their number to chair the meeting.
46. The Vice Chair(s) shall in all matters act in the place of the Chair whenever the Chair is unable to carry out the Chair's responsibilities owing to incapacity or absence.

## Appointment of Corporation Chair

47. The Corporation shall appoint one of its members to be Chair. The Principal, staff and student members shall not be eligible for appointment as Chair. Nominations for the role of Chair shall be made by any two members of the Corporation. Appointment shall be by decision of the Corporation made
through normal voting procedures at a meeting at which appointment of the Chair was an Agenda item.
48. The Corporation, when appointing the Chair shall specify a term of office not exceeding two years. On expiry of such a term the appointee shall be eligible for re-appointment. Appointment as Chair shall end on expiry of a term of membership.

## Appointment of Vice Chair(s)

49. The same rules as for appointment of Chair (above) apply to the appointment of the Vice Chair(s).

## Appointment of Chair of Committee

50. The Search Committee will make recommendations to Corporation for the appointment of committee chairs from the Corporation membership. The appointment shall be reviewed at the start of each academic year. Members may serve as committee chairs for consecutive years.

## Removal of Chair or Vice Chair(s)

51. Any proposal to remove from office the Chair or a Vice Chair of the Corporation must be the subject of a specific agenda item at a Corporation meeting. The Corporation Secretary shall administer the proceedings to enable members to debate and vote on such an item. Normal voting procedures shall apply.

## Action by Chair

52. Provision is made within the Articles of Government (Article 4) for the delegation of functions to the Chair of the Corporation, or in the Chair's absence, a Vice Chair, providing it is not a function which may not be delegated (Articles 9 and 10). There are occasions when issues arise which would normally be placed before the Corporation but the next scheduled meeting is too distant, it is not thought appropriate to call a special meeting, and an immediate decision is, in the Chair's opinion, required to safeguard the interests of the Corporation. In such circumstances the Corporation has agreed that the Chair, or in the Chair's absence, a Vice Chair, may take action on behalf of the Governing Body provided such a course of action is not contrary to the Articles of Government or any other regulations. Such action must take into account the recommendation of the Principal and any professional advice taken on the matter. Wherever possible the Chair will seek the views of one or both Vice Chair(s) and chairs of the appropriate
committees prior to deciding on a course of action. Any such action shall be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Body.

## 52a. Written Resolutions

Provision is made within the Instrument (Clause 12) for decisions to be taken by written resolution. Corporation has agreed that these provisions will be used sparingly and only by approval of the Chair of Corporation, or in the Chair's absence, a Vice Chair or Committee Chair if circumstances are deemed to be exceptional, where it is not possible or practical to convene a special meeting and where a decision by written resolution is appropriate for the matter in question.

## Access to Corporation Meetings

53. Members of the Corporation and the Corporation Secretary are entitled to attend all meetings of the Corporation. Responsibility for determining who else attends rests with the Corporation.
54. It is anticipated that members of staff shall be invited to attend all or part of a meeting to assist the Corporation in the consideration of issues before it.
55. Any person wishing to attend a Corporation or committee meeting as an observer shall seek consent from the Chair of the Corporation or committee through the Corporation Secretary. Such consent will not be unreasonably withheld. An observer shall have no right to speak at a meeting unless specifically invited to address the meeting. The Chair shall have the power to ask any observer to withdraw at any point in the meeting.

## Access to Information and Data Protection

56. Publication of agendas, minutes and papers is governed by the College Data Protection Policy, the Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. The documents listed in Appendix 3 are readily available for inspection under the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.
57. The College has published a Privacy Notice to inform Corporation Members how it intends to use their data, which can be found at Appendix 5. Data is collected, processed, held and shared to enable effective administration of Corporation membership.

## Minutes

58. Draft minutes of meetings shall be produced by the Corporation Secretary (or his/her nominee), approved by the Corporation or Committee Chair, and circulated to all those eligible to attend the meeting, usually within 14 days. Where substantial amendments are suggested by a member, and agreed by the Chair, amended minutes will be issued.
59. Chair approved minutes shall be taken as authority to take action on any matter arising from the decisions of a meeting.
60. Minor amendments to Chair approved minutes will be made at the next meeting of the Corporation or committee either by alteration and initialling by the Chair of the minute book copy or by minuting the agreed amendment, or both.
61. The Corporation may determine that the whole or part of a minute is confidential in which case it will be recorded separately and will not form part of the published minutes. The published minutes will, however, record the existence of the confidential minute. The Corporation will regularly review the confidential minutes and consider whether the confidential status should be removed or whether the public interest in disclosure outweighs that confidential status. In doing so, the Corporation will consider the College's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

## Statements on Behalf of the Corporation

62. Unless otherwise agreed by the Corporation in individual circumstances, formal statements on behalf of the Governing Body will be made only by the:

- Chair (or a Vice Chair, in the Chair's absence, after consultation with the Chair and/or Principal)
- Principal and Chief Executive; or the
- Corporation Secretary, after consultation with the Chair and Principal

63. Custom and practice are for the Principal or Corporation Secretary to respond to correspondence from staff (including representatives of the staff such as union officers) so as to reduce the burden on individual members and to ensure collective decisions be followed.

## Propriety of Corporation Action

64. Should the Principal in his/her role as Accounting Officer, or the Corporation Secretary, consider that the Corporation or any of its committees is acting inappropriately or beyond its power then:

- the Principal or Corporation Secretary will advise the meeting on their view of the matter;
- the meeting will attempt to resolve the possible difficulty through discussion;
- if a resolution satisfactory to all parties is not obtained, the meeting shall defer any decisions on the contentious issue to the next meeting of the Corporation. This will allow the Principal or Corporation Secretary to seek advice from an appropriate external source (eg. College auditors, AoC, College legal advisers.), which will be reported to the next meeting of the Corporation when a decision on the issue will be taken. If appropriate, the Chair may call an urgent meeting of the Corporation for this purpose.

65. The Accountability Agreement with the Education \& Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) recognises that a corporation is an independent body responsible for managing the college and ensuring its financial viability. However, the Corporation must inform the ESFA's Chief Executive of any transaction that could jeopardise the college's financial viability and must also be able to demonstrate that all transactions achieve value for money for funds provided under the Accountability Agreement.
66. The Principal, in his/her role as Accounting Officer must advise the Governing Body if at any time in his/her opinion any action under consideration by the Governing Body is incompatible with the Accountability Agreement. If the Governing Body resolves to continue with such action the Accounting Officer must inform the Chief Executive of the Education \& Skills Funding Agency.
67. Any such steps taken in good faith by the Principal or Corporation Secretary shall not be grounds for disciplinary action under the College's disciplinary procedures nor under the provisions of Articles 16 and 17.
68. Members have a right to seek independent advice where they consider it necessary to ensure the propriety of behaviour of the Corporation. Such advice will normally be sought from the College's legal advisers or another appropriate professional service (eg Association of Colleges) through the Corporation Secretary. However where a member believes that consultation with the Corporation's usual advisers would be inappropriate, and is prepared to state the reasons for this belief, he/she is entitled to request the Corporation Secretary to seek advice from an alternative source. Where the reasons put forward for such a view are fair and valid the Corporation Secretary should not refuse such a request and the College will ensure that sufficient budget is available for the Corporation Secretary to procure such advice.

## Amendments

69. The Corporation Secretary will keep these Standing Orders under review and suggest amendments as appropriate. Individual members may also suggest changes. All amendments must be approved by a meeting of the Governing Body, except where they are covered directly or indirectly by statute, in which case such changes will be activated without delay.

## Appendix 1

## Composition of Corporation of New College Durham

## Effective 6 July 2023

18 members - including 2 Staff members, 2 Student members and 1 Principal

Quorum $40 \%$ of the total number of members in office from time to time, not including vacancies (or 8 members when there are no vacancies)

## Appendix 2

## Members' Expenses

1. Travel, subsistence and other expenses reasonably incurred by a member in the carrying out of his/her duties as a Governor will be reimbursed by New College Durham. Any query as to the reasonableness of any sum likely to be expended by a governor should be clarified with the Corporation Secretary prior to the expense being incurred.
2. Reimbursement of costs shall be authorised by the Chair and/or Corporation Secretary on completion of the appropriate form and production of relevant receipts.
3. Attendance allowances (ie. payment for attending meetings) shall not be payable.

## Appendix 3

## Documents readily available for inspection under the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

1. Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference *
2. Annual Report and Financial Statements*
3. College Prospectus*
4. College Inspection Report*
5. Information on examination results
6. Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members *
7. Instrument and Articles of Government *
8. Public Interest Disclosure Policy ('Whistleblowing')*
9. Agendas* papers and minutes* of Corporation meetings
10. Committee minutes
11. Register of Corporation members' interests
12. Procedure for appointing new governors *
13. Arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students *
14. Conflicts of Interest Policy *

This is not an exhaustive list of items available for inspection

* Published on the College website


## Appendix 4

## Trustee disqualification rules under the Charities Act 2011

From 1 August 2018 there will be changes made to the rules on the automatic disqualification of charity trustees.

Existing legal disqualifying reasons from acting as a Charity Trustee are as follows:

- Unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
- Being a person who has been removed from a relevant office by the Charity Commission
- Director disqualification
- Insolvency

The full list of wider offences and circumstances that will trigger automatic disqualification with effect from 1 August 2018 are as follows:

- Unspent conviction for specified terrorism, money laundering or bribery offences;
- Unspent conviction for contravening a Charity Commission Order or Direction;
- Unspent conviction for misconduct in public office, perjury or perverting the course of justice;
- Unspent conviction for attempting, aiding or abetting any of the above offences;
- Disobeying a Charity Commission Order;
- Being on the sex offenders register;
- Unspent sanction for contempt of Court; or
- Being a designated persons under specific anti-terrorist legislation.

Members are respectfully reminded that acting as a charity trustee while disqualified is a criminal offence.

## Appendix 5

# The Corporation of New College Durham 

## Privacy Notice

## How we use Corporation Members' information

The College has published a Privacy Notice on its website to inform people how we intend to use their data http://www.newcollegedurham.ac.uk/legal/ which can be found at the foot of the homepage under Legal.

New College Durham collects and holds data on Corporation Members to enable us to administrate your membership as a Governor. Safeguarding our young people is an essential part of our business and the data collected enables us to achieve this by ensuring that all Corporation Members are fit and proper people to serve as trustees.

## The categories of Corporation Members' information that we collect, process, hold and share include:

- Personal information (such as name, date of birth, home address, phone and email address, and where appropriate, your work address, phone and email address);
- Other personal information (such as bank details, for when you are claiming expenses);
- Special categories of data (such as gender, age, ethnic group, disability, religion, marital status and sexual orientation) for equal opportunity monitoring;
- Qualifications, skills and experience, including employment history;
- Register of financial and personal interests (such as paid employment, self-employment, directorships of commercial companies, significant shareholdings, elected office, trusteeships or participation in the management of charities and other voluntary bodies, public appointments (paid or unpaid), membership of professional bodies, special interest groups and trade or other associations, partnerships or consultancies (paid or unpaid) and whether you have provided goods and services to the company;
- Specifically for Directors of Westfirst Limited, the College's subsidiary company, your name, title, role, date of appointment, nationality, date of birth, details of other directorships, your address and country of residence.


## Why we collect and use this information

We use Governing Body data to:

- Maintain the statutory register of Corporation Members;
- To register details of Directors' appointments and resignations with Companies House for the College subsidiary company, Westfirst Limited, and published on the Companies House website (company number 02906949);
- To maintain the statutory Register of Interests to ensure transparency and identify possible conflicts of interest, that is to say situations where your interests may (or may appear to) influence your decision making;
- Enable us to administrate your membership of the Governing Body;
- Inform the recruitment and selection process so that we have a Governing Body with the necessary skills;
- Perform the necessary checks for eligibility to serve as a charity trustee (such as a DBS check and checking for automatic disqualification of charity trustees under Charities Act 2011);
- Reimburse your expenses under the Governing Body's Expenses Policy;
- NCD is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. This includes not discriminating under the Equality Act 2010, and building an accurate picture of the composition of the Governing Body to encourage equality and diversity. In order to monitor diversity effectively, it is necessary to collect personal information across all nine of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Completing this Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is voluntary. The information on this form will be treated in confidence and used for monitoring purposes only. It will be used to produce an anonymised report to assist with Governing Body succession planning.


## The lawful basis on which we process this information

We collect and use Governing Body information as we are required to do so by Company Law, Charity Law, by regulation of the Secretary of State for Education or as a contractual obligation under the funding agreements.
Directors are required to be registered with Companies House in accordance with Company Law.

## Collecting this information

Whilst the majority of information you provide us is mandatory, some of it is provided to us on a voluntary basis. In order to comply with data protection legislation, we will inform you whether you are required to provide certain Governing Body information to us or if you have a choice in this.

## Storing this information

Your data will form part of the register of Corporation Members and will be retained in your individual governor file for the period of your appointment plus 10 years after your membership ends. Basic details such as your name and term of office will be retained in the register of Corporation Members for the life of the organisation. For Directors of Westfirst Limited, certain details such as your name, address, nationality, date of birth, occupation and term of office will be retained in the Register of Directors for the life of the company. Directors' details registered with Companies House will be retained by Companies House for the life of the company.

## Who we share this information with

We are required to share this information with:

- Companies House, if you are a Director of Westfirst Limited;
- The Office for Students is the new regulator for Higher Education; it requires details of Corporation Members, including other directorships, to make sure that they are fit and proper persons;
- Disclosure and Barring Service;
- Certain details are required to be published on the College website;
- Internal and external auditors;
- Ofsted, Quality Assurance Agency and other similar bodies.


## Why we share Governing Body information

We do not share information about Corporation Members with anyone without consent unless the law and our policies allow us to do so.

