

DODD PARTNERS

— BOARD & EXECUTIVE SEARCH —



HEAD OF GOVERNANCE AND DATA PROTECTION OFFICER

Candidate Information Pack

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in applying for this key role in Lakes College. You will be sure to receive a warm welcome from the Board, who are both enthusiastic and committed and bring a breadth of knowledge and experience to their remit. Providing an exceptional offer and learning to our local communities (and beyond in some specialisms) is at the core of our ambition for the College.

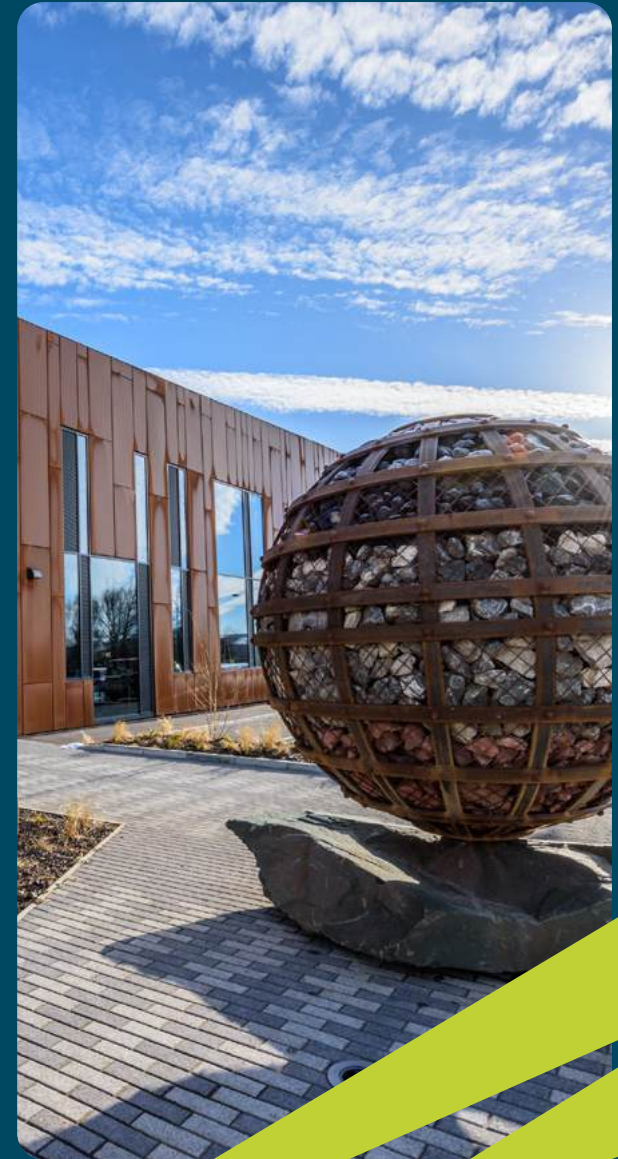
Your considerable expertise in corporate governance will help us move forward from a platform of strong, good governance to exceptional governance, with a Board who are always open to new ideas and approaches. Training and development will be on offer to the right candidate to meet sector specific requirements.

This is an amazing opportunity to put your own stamp on Governance at Lakes College, working closely with me and my fellow board members.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Nigel Holiday
Chair of the Corporation



LAKES COLLEGE

Lakes College is a technical vocational Further Education College delivering education and training to full-time and part-time learners and apprentices to degree level.

We have a vibrant campus in West Cumbria with state-of-the-art vocational workshops and resources, including the National College for Nuclear and Clean Energy Northern Hub.

Our mission and purpose are to:

‘Enable people to recognise and develop their potential’.

We are a people business and our mission applies as equally to our staff team as to our learners and employers’. We are a Good college and have ambition to be exceptional by developing together our culture, standards and expectations. We encourage innovation, collaboration and reflection to lead to new ideas and methods. We gather, evaluate and use data to drive operational improvement.



GOVERNANCE

Governors have a strong understanding of the local community, which together with an excellent skills mix, expertise and experience, provides a strong platform to support and challenge the Executive from a diverse range of perspectives.

The Board currently meets eight times a year, supported by working groups and committees, and enjoys excellent relationships with the Executive team based on mutual trust and understanding. Most governors undertake link governor activity and attend events in the course of the year, such as parents' evenings.

In the coming year, the Board will be reviewing local needs as part of a review of the strategic plan and will carry out an external review of governance; there will ample and early opportunity to engage and help shape and influence the Board's engagement and relationships.

External stakeholders have been consistently positive about governance over the past 10 years including the most recent Ofsted in 2024:

'Governors provide strong support and challenge to leaders and clearly understand and support the college's strategic plan. They clearly articulate changes to the curriculum in recent years and their roles in the rationale for these changes; for example, the benefits of adverse apprenticeship offer for young people from disadvantaged areas that the college serves, where full-time education may not be financially viable.'



PEOPLE & CULTURE

Our vision is brought to life by our people. We have ambitious, well-supported staff, entirely focused on exceptional delivery across all provisions. Retaining staff and succession planning, however, will be critical to our long-term success. We invest heavily in CPD and role enhancement, and encourage internal promotion.

The success of the college is predicated on our commitment to developing our people, recognising that a 'grow your own' strategy is sensible. The college will continue to invest in CPD with vocational practitioners supported to undertake professional qualifications to level 6, management development programmes, and vocational updating with employers and sector experts.

This enables us to recruit well to all key areas and promote from within, with 25 staff promotions over the last 18 months. Historically, 11% of vacancies are filled by internal candidates



FINANCIAL HEALTH

Lakes College is a vocational college offering provision from entry to level 6. Income growth has been driven by effective stakeholder engagement and collaboration, meeting the skills needs of our local economy, local employers and learners. Effective engagement with employers has supported growth from £11m to £20m over the last 10 years.

In response to local needs, the college has a relatively high proportion of apprenticeship income at circa 35%. Approximately 40% of income is derived from 16-19 provision, 7% Adult and HE, and 18% from other income sources. 16-19 provision is relatively static with very limited demographic growth. Adult Skills Funds are fully utilised.

Cumbria's move to a devolved mayoral authority over the period of our strategic plan is expected to bring additional flexibility and opportunities. Financial Health for FY26, FY27 and FY28 is forecast to be Outstanding.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Lakes College was graded as Good by Ofsted in January 2024.

Following engagement with staff, our quality improvement standards are now set at “exceptional”. Over the next three years, we will normalise all provision standards of delivery and outcome at this level, referencing appropriate sector norms. We redesigned our self-assessment and quality-management cycle to reflect this, engaging teams in more focused, evidence-based project work. When combined with the realignment of roles and responsibilities, the ambition of ‘exceptional’ is now matched by the approach.

Our Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy is sector-leading and has all the ingredients to support exceptional teaching for learning. Through the relentless pursuit of exceptional delivery, we will achieve the highest standards across all provision. Pass rates on vocational full-time courses have remained above 95% for the past three years, well above the national average each year, and we forecast this will continue.



IMPACT

We continue to provide a comprehensive and diverse offering that strikes a balance between supporting employers' priorities and cultivating a pipeline of talented, well-trained, and qualified employees. We continue to refine our study programmes, identify high-quality apprenticeship opportunities, encourage adults into work in priority areas, and support employees to develop knowledge and skills for career progression. We will complement our core offer with Routes into Work programmes, upskilling and reskilling adult learners, and providing access and re-engagement programmes to help those economically inactive and/or in low-skilled/low-paid jobs to access work and skilled careers.

Remaining as an independent college provides us with the best opportunity to serve our employers' current and future needs swiftly, directly, and without competing interests. We can sensibly reinvest resources as best meets the interests of our region, maintaining the clarity and purpose of our vision and mission without distraction or dilution. Our rapid progress in restoring financial health enables us to focus our efforts on immediate stakeholder interests.

Our strategic curriculum plans align neatly with Cumbria's LSIP. Key sectors include:

- Construction
- Energy
- Land-Based
- Manufacturing/Engineering
- Social Care
- Visitor Economy

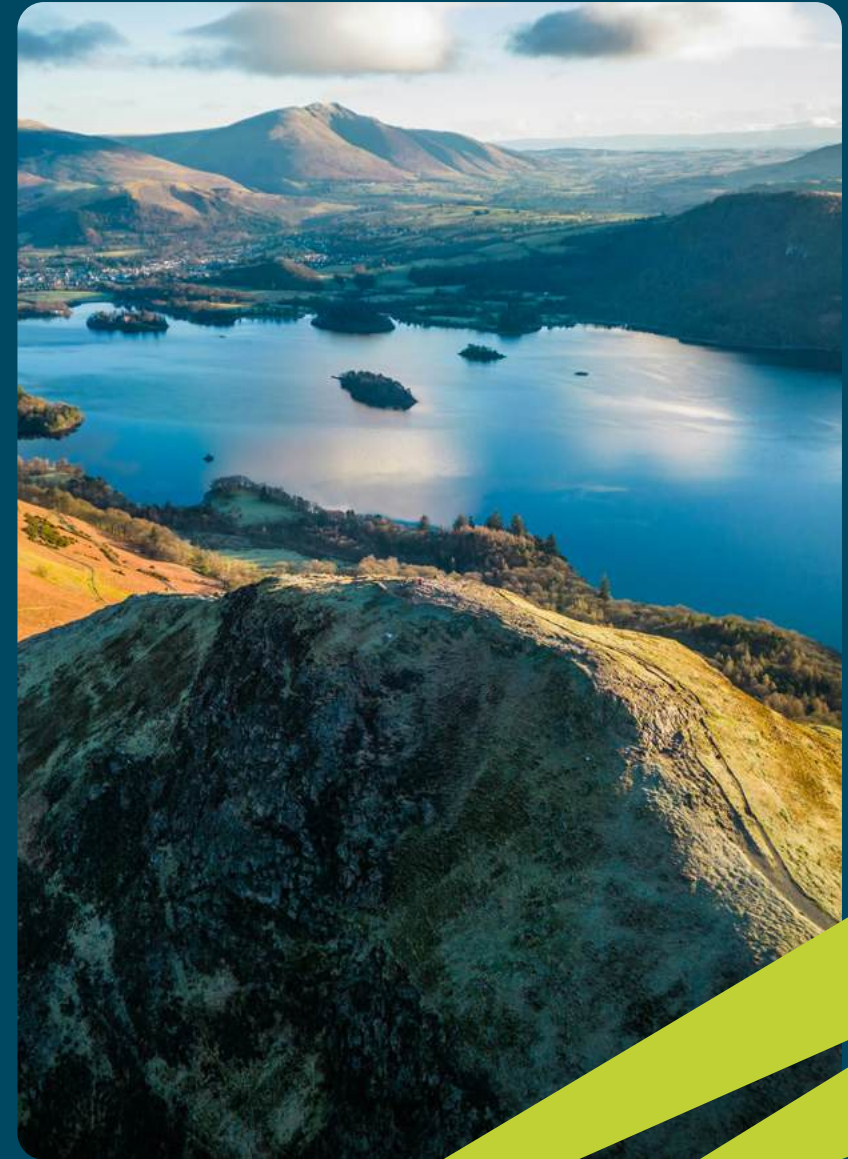


CUMBRIA REGION

Characterised by its outstanding rural landscape, Cumbria is the second-largest county in England and has a population of approximately 500,000 inhabitants. There are four GFE colleges in the county, situated around the periphery of the region where the largest centres of population lie.

Given such demographics, travel has a discernible impact on learner choice. As a result of this, colleges in the region have consistently collaborated on key projects and initiatives with the University of Cumbria to address the needs of the communities they support.

Within the college's primary catchment area, there are 10 communities in the most deprived 10% of communities in England. This is countered by the well-paid workforce that supports the nuclear industry and its supply chain, highlighting the demands placed on the college and the importance of putting skills for jobs at the heart of what the college does, and why equality of learning is vital to the college's long-term future.



PURPOSE, VISION & VALUES

PURPOSE

Delivering excellent technical and professional skills to enhance the prosperity of our people and communities.

VISION

Lakes College – an exceptional institution providing the skills and opportunities to power Cumbria's economy.

VALUES

The values that underpin our ethos, expectations and standards are that all staff and learners are ready, show respect, and develop to your potential.



UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We are relentless in seeking improvements to our offer and operations to exceptional standards for sector norms and best practice.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE

We attract, retain and develop outstanding people by differentiating ourselves.

PARTNERSHIPS

We add value by working collaboratively with key partners, co-investing in our future.



HOW TO APPLY

Dodd Partners are undertaking the recruitment process on behalf of Lakes College. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following:

- A covering letter highlighting your suitability and how you meet the Essential Experience criteria detailed within the Person Specification, along with your current remuneration details.
- A comprehensive CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements. Shortlisted candidates will be required to fill out a full application form in line with Safer Recruitment Practices.
- All applications should be emailed to Dodd Partners at your earliest convenience and no later than 1700h, Monday 26th January 2026 to contactus@doddpartners.com, clearly marked with reference number DP3147.

Should you wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact John Dodd on 07545 431 848 or 01244 738 450. Alternatively, email: johndodd@doddpartners.com



TIMELINE

PROCESS

DATE

Close for Applications

Monday 26th January 2026 (17:00pm)

Shortlist Meeting

Tuesday 27th January 2026

Interviews with Lakes College

Monday 9 February 2026



TERMS

REMUNERATION

The remuneration for this post is competitive in line with sector benchmarks and expectations

ANNUAL HOLIDAYS

The annual leave entitlement is 29 days pro rata per annum rising to 33 days pro rata after 5 years service - plus 3 Christmas closure days and 2 discretionary days pro rata, plus recognised public holidays.

PENSION SCHEME

The holder of this post will have access to a Local Government Pension Scheme.

RELOCATION ALLOWANCE

The College is happy to discuss a relocation allowance in line with HMRC regulations.

CHECKS

This appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment references and DBS clearance.



JOB SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: HEAD OF GOVERNANCE AND DATA PROTECTION OFFICER
REPORTS TO: CHAIR ON BEHALF OF THE CORPORATION / BOARD OF GOVERNORS
APPOINTED BY: THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The postholder should be treated as a senior post holder (if not formally designated as such). The role is a statutory requirement

PURPOSE

- Responsible for providing independent, high-quality guidance on statutory, constitutional, operational procedural and ethical issues as they affect the Board, its working groups and its subsidiaries
- Provide leadership, advice and support in all governance activities, statutory and regulatory compliance and external governance relations
- Support the Board and its members in evaluating their effectiveness and training and development
- Inform and advise the Board of developments within the sector and relevant news from outside the sector
- Responsible for ensuring corporate governance arrangements contribute meaningfully to the strategic development of the College, and that the College becomes an exemplar of best practice in its corporate governance arrangements.
- Manage senior relationships at Board of Governors (Board) and executive level, adding more value to the wider corporate picture, and the ability to work and engage with external stakeholders, including colleagues at DfE.
- Ensure the Board is accountable to its internal and external stakeholders.
- Be proactive in keeping abreast of current and emerging guidance and legislation and advising governors accordingly.
- The Head of Governance will carry out the duties of Data Protection Officer.
- While the college does support flexible working by agreement, it is noted that the ability to foster and maintain the good working relationships required of the governance will necessitate some working on site.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

PROVIDE ADVICE TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- Advise the Board of Governors/Principal & CEO on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings.
- To provide advice, strategic and administrative support to the Corporation to ensure the proper and efficient conduct of Corporation business and to promote excellence in College governance.
- To advise members of the Corporation Board on the proper exercise of their powers within Statutory Instruments issued under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and subsequent revisions.
- Act as the first point of contact for governors with queries on procedural matters.
- Have access to appropriate legal advice, support and guidance, and where necessary, to seek advice and guidance from third parties on behalf of the Board of Governors.
- Inform the Board of Governors of any changes to its responsibilities as a result of a change in College status or changes in the relevant legislation.
- Offer professional advice on best practice in governance, including on committee structures and self- evaluation. Give guidance to the Corporation Board, its Committees, or the Chair if the Board or a Committee appears to be at risk of acting outside its powers or in a way which may be unlawful.
- Ensure that statutory policies and procedures are in place and are updated and revised when necessary.
- To advise on the balance of membership, including members' experience and skills required by the Governing body and how new members might be recruited.
- Advise on the annual calendar of Board of Governors' meetings and tasks and to maintain a schedule of key decisions made and to be made.
- Independently brief the Chair and other governors on current issues and support liaison between the Chair, the Principal & CEO and governors.
- Act as a point of reference for all enquiries relating to the Corporation and act as correspondent for the Corporation as appropriate.
- To keep the Common Seal in safe custody.
- Ensure that all deeds and documents to which the Common Seal has been affixed have been properly authenticated and a record kept.
- To support the Principal & CEO in the management and monitoring of the College's Strategic Plan.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF MEETINGS

- With the Chair and Principal & CEO, to prepare focused agendas for the Board of Governors' meetings and sub-committee meetings.
- To provide dedicated clerical and secretarial support to the Board, and to prepare all correspondence on behalf of the Chair of Governors, the Governing Body and its Committees.
- Liaise with individuals preparing papers to ensure documentation is available by the required time and to distribute the agenda and papers, as required by legislation or other regulations.
- To ensure the quorum of all meetings.
- Circulate minutes of Board of Governors' meetings as appropriate, together with agreed actions.
- Prepare reports on Governance matters to the Corporation. To maintain and produce the required documentation to satisfy internal and external audit requirements and requirements of regulatory bodies, e.g., Ofsted, DfE etc.
- To carry out regular skills audits for members and to facilitate the annual self-assessment of performance from the Chair, individual Members, Committees and the Corporation as a body.
- Work closely with the Chair and the Principal & CEO and as well as with other members of College management and staff to support the Board in fulfilling its remit and to ensure support for and implementation of Board decisions.
- Administering the reimbursement of any members' expenses.
- To carry out company secretary duties for National College for Nuclear and for Lakes College Enterprises Ltd.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

MEMBERSHIP

- Advise governors and appointing bodies in advance of the expiry of a governor's term of office in order that elections or appointments can be organised in a timely manner.
- Chair the part of the meeting at which the Chair is elected, giving procedural advice concerning conduct of this and other elections.
- Maintain a register of governor pecuniary interests and related party transactions and ensure that the record of governors' business interests is reviewed regularly and lodged within the College.
- Lead on the induction, training and development of the Board.
- Support the Board and its members to evaluate effectiveness and to harness and to address training and development needs.
- Lead on, and facilitate, the recruitment of governors to ensure that membership of the Board comprises the appropriate balance and breadth of skills, knowledge and experience.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

MANAGE INFORMATION

- Submit all required documentation and returns to the Department for Education (DfE) or other Regulators or agencies, as required, for the College and all its subsidiaries, within the statutory timescales.
- Maintain up to date records of the names, addresses and category of Board of Governors members and their terms of office, and to inform the Board of Governors and any relevant authorities of any changes to membership.
- Maintain a record of signed minutes of meetings in College and to ensure that copies are sent to relevant bodies on request and are published as agreed at meetings.
- Maintain a register of members' interests, a Corporation Members' Handbook and Standing Orders, a Members' Code of Conduct, Members' Record of Attendance at meetings of the Corporation, and a Calendar of Meetings.
- Ensure that copies of statutory policies and other College documents approved by the Board of Governors are kept within the College and published as agreed, for example, on the website.

POLICIES

- To act as an independent person under the College's Whistleblowing procedure and to carry out such investigation as necessary or arrange for another external body to carry out such investigations.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

DATA PROTECTION OFFICER DUTIES

- Act as the key officer for data protection within the College, providing advice and guidance to the Principal/CEO, leadership team, external partners etc., on the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and any other legislation relating to data protection and to inform the Executive Team of the obligations under these legislations.
- Support the College Leadership Team and others to ensure corporate compliance; matters pertaining to monitoring compliance with GDPR, Data Protection Impact Assessments, Data Protection and Freedom of Information.
- Work closely with the Executive Team to create and maintain appropriate data protection policies and procedures and manage an assurance programme and related audits including, but not limited to, data sharing, disclosure and data retention.
- Act as the main point of contact for the Information Commissioner's Office and the liaison between the public, staff and the College for data protection
- Ensure a continuous training programme for staff on GDPR, DPA and data protection
- Ensure college systems, processes and procedures meet the requirements under the GDPR, the DPA and any other legislation relating to data protection
- Regularly update the College's Data Protection and Information Security suite of policies and strategies so that they reflect the requirements of the GDPR, the DPA and any other legislation relating to data protection.
- Take the lead in dealing with complaints and/or requests from the Information Commissioner's Office relating to respect of requests for information under the Act or the Regulations.
- Liaise with internal stakeholders and external partners to ensure that appropriate and robust Information Sharing and Data Processing Agreements are in place.
- Monitor the response to requests from the ICO and co-operate with them where required; maintaining the documentation, notification and communication of Information Security breaches professionally liaising with Executive and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) where necessary.
- Support internal teams with the Freedom of Information requests and the management of Subject Access Requests within legal timeframes, including the use of relevant exemptions and specific redaction queries.
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of current and developing data protection legislation, external standards and best practice, Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

AD HOC ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- As required, to Clerk any Statutory Appeal committees/panels the Board of Governors is required to convene.
- Organise Student Governor interviews or elections, and staff governor elections.
- Conduct skills audits and to advise on training requirements and the criteria for appointing new governors relevant to vacancies.
- Act as the formal College Secretary as required.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

GENERIC COLLEGE ACCOUNTABILITIES

- To operate within the college's safeguarding children and vulnerable adult's policy to promote and safeguard the welfare of college's learners who are under the age of 18, and of vulnerable adults to meet the college's moral and legal responsibilities.
- To work as a member of the team, both within the section and as part of the service as a whole, to promote a team culture and environment and contribute towards the team development and assist others as necessary during periods of peak demand.
- To contribute to the quality system of the section to ensure the delivery of a high quality service.
- To participate in the college's performance management scheme, in order to ensure personal development needs are identified to allow maximisation of a high level of performance.
- To operate and monitor college Health and Safety Policy, in order to ensure a safe and healthy learning and working environment.
- To proactively create, communicate, implement and support the college's Sustainability Development Strategy to ensure college targets are achieved.
- To operate and support college's Equal Opportunities Policy, in order to ensure adherence throughout the college.
- To contribute to the smooth running of the college by undertaking other administrative duties as required to support the management of the college.
- To participate in the promotional and marketing activities of the college and ensure a professional and favourable image is portrayed at all times to enhance the college's reputation and assist in ensuring its future success.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS:

ESSENTIAL

Relevant degree and/or professional qualifications e.g. The Chartered Governance Institute (formerly ICSA), law, accountancy, audit, business management demonstrating a willingness to commit to sector CPD.

DESIRABLE

Chartered Secretary status or hold similar, relevant qualification.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE:

ESSENTIAL

Extensive and current governance knowledge with a willingness to commit to sector specific governance training to a senior level.

Executive leadership of a governance function within a complex customer-centric environment.

DESIRABLE

Experience of working in a group with multiple and different legal entities, partnerships, collaborations, and joint ventures with familiarity of the company secretary role.

Strong experience of supporting governors to manage change and meet the growth agenda.

Analytical and problem-solving experience.

Confidence in interpreting and applying legislation.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

VALUES AND PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

- Committed to the values and vision of the organisation
- Committed to Equality and Inclusion
- Achieving goals through influence
- Committed to the Nolan principles
- Committed to excellent governance
- Highly driven and confident



PERSON SPECIFICATION

TEAMWORK & PERSONAL CREDIBILITY

- Work collaboratively and for the good of all
- Welcome suggestions for improving standards and offer suggest improvements
- Act as a team player
- Accept responsibility for personal activities within agreed parameters
- Display a high standard of personal integrity
- Demonstrate a good understanding of and positive commitment to organisational objectives



PERSON SPECIFICATION

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

- Ability to contribute strategically to the development of the College in its intention to become 'exceptional'
- Excellent people skills to support engagement with staff at all levels across the College and beyond.
- Proven ability in planning and organisation, with excellent attention to detail.
- The ability to act with detachment and impartiality to serve the best interests of the Board and the Senior Leadership Team
- Proven ability to grasp complex issues and manage complicated projects, taking a proactive approach with high levels of autonomy and demonstrating sound judgement
- A team player who is self-motivated and personally resilient.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

COMMUNICATION

- Communications experience, particularly in the areas of consensus-building and public presentation
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to present analysis in an understandable and concise manner



PERSON SPECIFICATION

ANALYTICAL & DECISION MAKING SKILLS

- Uses logic, analysis, experience and models to solve problems
- Organised and attentive to detail
- Examines options to find solutions or seeks suggestions that are effective in addressing the problem in hand



PERSON SPECIFICATION

INTERNAL CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Demonstrates meeting expectations of internal customers, including students
- Develops relationships with internal customers and gains their respect
- Treats internal customers fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner



PERSON SPECIFICATION

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS & INITIATIVE TAKING

- Demonstrates ability to work under pressure, prioritise and commit to strict deadlines whilst maintaining the quality of output
- Ability to prioritise own work, multi-task and shift priorities
- Proactive in taking action to achieve goals

