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# Candidate Brief

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## Board Members Nelson & Colne College Group

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D O D D P A R T N E R S

— BOARD & EXECUTIVE SEARCH —

[www.doddpartners.com](http://www.doddpartners.com)

# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Board member of the Nelson and Colne College Group.

We are proud of our College Group, of our phenomenal people and the outstanding service we provide to our students and the businesses and communities we serve. We aim to 'create the extraordinary' in all we do, and this ambition and drive has led the Group to be one of the highest achieving colleges in the country with a deserved track record and reputation for quality, innovation and excellence. Ofsted 'outstanding' since 2005, our latest inspection in 2022 confirmed us as the only 'outstanding' Further Education college in Lancashire. We invite you to become a part of our journey, and to share your exceptional leadership and partnership skills, drive and ambition to help us continue to progress and succeed in our ambition to 'create the extraordinary'.

Now is an exciting time to join the College Group, which brings together Nelson and Colne College, Accrington and Rossendale College and Lancashire Adult Learning. Nelson and Colne College has a national reputation for educational success and is seen within the sector as a beacon of excellence for teaching and learning. Accrington and Rossendale College is a hub for technical and professional skills delivery. With a recent £4 million investment in our campus at Accrington and a further £5 million planned, we offer a relevant, impactful and high-quality curriculum that responds to individual, regional and national needs. Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL) is the second largest adult community learning provider in the country, providing exceptional learning opportunities throughout the whole of Lancashire.

Our Board makes a critical contribution to setting the strategic vision of the Group, in line with our values and mission, and is ambitious to ensure that the College Group maintains the highest levels of quality while building on our exciting plans for growth. The Group was formed in 2018, following the successful merger of Nelson and Colne College and Accrington and Rossendale College. Under the leadership of our Principal and CEO, Lisa O'Loughlin, we are delivering an exciting 2030 Strategic Plan and investment strategy to achieve our ambitions – key to which is ensuring the Group's curriculum offer is co-created with employers and reflects current and future employer needs at local, regional and national levels. As a Board member, you will join a high-performing team and understand the importance of focusing on finance, quality and workforce culture in equal measure to bring about success. You will have many years' experience in a corporate, public sector or third sector leadership role and have worked hard to build a climate of openness, respect and trust in all your previous roles: equality and diversity is not a process for you, it is part of your core values based on your respect for people.



There is much to be proud of in the Nelson and Colne College Group, as well as an exciting opportunity to develop and oversee the ambitious vision for our Group's further success. If you have the skills, talent and commitment needed, we invite you to help us continue to achieve our value of "never stopping at 'good enough'" in all that we do to help our learners achieve and our communities thrive.

**Phil Wilkinson**  
**Chair of the Corporation**

# About Nelson & Colne College Group

Nelson and Colne College Group was formed by merger in 2018 and includes:

- Nelson and Colne College, with its campus in Nelson
- Accrington and Rossendale College, with its campus in Accrington
- Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL), with its operational base at Northlight in Brierfield, delivering adult community learning throughout the whole of Lancashire

In 2022/2023, almost 2,400 young people aged 16-18 were full-time students with our College Group. More than 10,400 adults accessed exceptional learning opportunities through Lancashire Adult Learning; our Higher



Education Centres at both campuses taught a broad range of professional and HE courses to 316 learners; and we supported more than 880 apprentices in learning, working with employers locally, regionally and nationally.

With a turnover of £32m, the College Group is financially strong and judged as having good financial health by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

College investment of c.£20 million in an ambitious capital and estates programme between 2021-26 is helping ensure we have the high quality and industry relevant space to

meet employer and learner needs. Recent developments include an Advanced Digital Skills Academy at our Nelson campus linked to T Level delivery and the Nelson Town Deal priorities and investment; plus estate development to support the Group's role in the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology (IoT), covering health care, digital, environmental and sustainable technologies and also engineering. Complementing the IoT investment plan, the College Group's STEM Excellence programme is also underway and will provide state-of-the-art resources to support full-time, part-time and flexible delivery of a range of level 4, 5 and 6 programmes, and higher and degree apprenticeships in engineering, sustainable technologies, computing and biomedical sciences. All these developments are underpinned by strong forward-looking partnership work with employers and employer representative bodies to support innovative curriculum development and delivery to industry standards.

Set in the heart of our communities in East Lancashire, the College Group is a major local employer with over 700 staff, of which more than 300 are teaching staff.

The majority of students at our campuses are drawn from our surrounding local travel-to-learn areas. We have a diverse student population. 75.3% of our students at Accrington and Rossendale College, and 69.2% at Nelson and Colne College, are from disadvantaged postcode areas. Reflecting our local communities, 64.5% of our learners at Nelson and Colne College, and 22.5% at Accrington and Rossendale, are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME).





# Vision, Values and Intent

## Our Vision

To create high quality routes into high-value Professional and Technical career for all our learners.

## Our Values

- We get off our backsides
- We push with love
- We own it!
- We never stop at good enough

## Our Strategic Curriculum Intent

- “Big Fat” Maths and English College
- Career Focused
- Right programme for every learner
- Positive destinations, not qualifications
- High quality, always, everywhere



## Our Strategic Goals

### Nelson Campus

To be the *number 1* provider of Academic Learning for 16-18 year olds in East Lancashire.

### Accrington Campus

To be the *first choice* for 16-18 year olds in Hyndburn and Rossendale for Technical Education.

### Lancashire Adult Learning

To be the *number 1* provider of Tailored Learning and Technical Education for Adults in England.

### Apprenticeships

To be the *first choice* for Apprenticeships in Lancashire's priority sectors.

### Higher Education

To support Lancashire 2050 by providing *high quality routes* to Level 4/5 technical roles, in key priority sectors.

### Group

To create *Industry Innovation Hubs* with employer co-designed facilities for Lancashire's priority sectors.

### Group

To provide the *highest quality co-created routes to employment* in Lancashire.

### Group

To harness the power of the Group enabling all of our '*colleges*' to achieve their goals.

### Group

To establish *collaborative partnerships* – enabling ethical growth' in the interest of all learners across the region.

## Key Achievements

Nelson and Colne College Group, is one of the highest performing Further Education college groups in the UK and we were accredited as Outstanding in our most recent Ofsted inspection in 2022.

**Consistently  
high performing  
achievement for  
young people**

**Number 1  
College in the UK  
Nationally for  
Adult  
achievement**

### Outstanding T Level High Grade Achievement with 96% high grades overall

#### A Level

Top FE College in the country for progress\*

#### GCSE Maths

Outstanding Grade 4-9 pass rates, double the national average.  
Outstanding progress score of 0.33, compared to -0.33 nationally.

#### GCSE English

Outstanding Grade pass rates significantly above the national average.  
Outstanding progress scores 0.01, compared to 0.27 nationally.

**Learners make excellent progression into positive destinations** into careers and to further study that benefit the local region and economy. 83% of A level students' progress to university. A very high proportion (19%) of young people progress to a Sutton 30 University

**A strong Leadership Team who work closely with government departments and sector agencies** including the Department for Education, Association of Colleges (AoC), and Education Training Foundation to be at the forefront of sector developments and government policy, including the delivery of the government's skills plan.

Our Principal and CEO's leadership roles include Board membership of the AoC and Funding and Accountability Group; as well as membership of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Skills and Employment Board, Steering Group for AEB Commissioning (Devolution Lancashire) and the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) Strategic Education and Training Collaborative.

**Exemplary partnerships with employers, strategic partners and key stakeholders** that inform and shape the curriculum to meet the regional skills and local employment needs contributing to the wider economy and communities.

#### **Consistently Outstanding 4-9 pass rates for young people in GCSE Maths and English.**

The College continues to be a Maths Centre for Excellence, contributing to the research and development of pedagogy in mathematics, sharing good practice regionally and nationally.

**A creative and ambitious curriculum that is focused on the development of the 'whole learner'** to prepare them for their next steps including: Pre-professional and scholars programme for level 3 academic learners; Placement Readiness Programme for Pre-Advanced Learners; a supported internship programme for learners with high needs.

### **An Apprenticeship programme**

driven by exceptional strategic partnerships with key employers to deliver a dedicated curriculum that provides industry standard training meeting the needs of the local and regional economy to address skills shortages and needs.

### **A highly responsive**

Lancashire wide, Adult Community Learning offer that is focused on widening participation, responding to the regional skills agenda, developing stronger and more integrated communities and meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged across the region.

### **Access Programmes**

High quality academic programmes that are aligned to regional skill needs, providing routes to higher education and employment, enabling upward economic and social mobility across the region.

**Rated 'Outstanding'**  
by Ofsted **since 2005**



### **Regional and National Awards:**

Winners of the AoC Student of the Year award, twice;

English Football League Community Project of the Season Award – Working with Veterans;

TES FE Award, Adult and Community Learning Provider of the Year;

AOC Adult Widening Participation Finalist 2024;

National Apprenticeship Awards Regional Finalist for two consecutive years;

Winner of the Lancashire Higher Level Apprentice of the Year Award 2024;

Shortlisted for FETN Tutor of the Year Award;

Winner of the Rising Star Award 2023 National Paper Hanging Competition;

Lancashire Skills Competitions: 2024 – the Rising Star Award for Barbering, Construction; Special Achievement Award for Construction Trades Health & Social Care Team; Digital Team; Young Enterprise Team

# Job Specification

**Job Title:** Board Member – Nelson & Colne College Group  
**Location:** Lancashire  
**Report to:** Chair, Nelson & Colne College Group

## Principal Accountabilities

- Setting and monitoring the strategic direction, mission and values of the College and ensuring the leadership and accountability of the Principal and Chief Executive and senior managers.
- Ensuring that a robust quality strategy is developed, approved and monitored.
- Accountable for the stewardship of public funds, including: annual approval of estimates of income and expenditure; effective and efficient management of resources to ensure the solvency of the College and the safeguarding of its assets.
- Ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal, pay and conditions of service of Holders of Senior Posts (SPHs), with specific responsibility for the appointment of all SPHs and for setting the framework for the pay and conditions for all other staff.
- Act as an ambassador for the College in the wider community.

## Collective Tasks

- Contribute towards the development and monitoring of the College's Strategic Plan.
- Prepare for, attend and actively participate in Board and Committee meetings and the annual Strategic Planning awaydays to assist the Corporation in its strategic oversight of College activities and to monitor the effectiveness of College management.
- Be an active member of at least one Committee of the Board and/or a Link Governor for a specific aspect of the curriculum, commercial or business support services.
- Participate in appropriate induction and training events, and complete any mandatory training required through legislation, as part of the Corporation's commitment to outstanding open governance.
- Contribute to an annual self-assessment of leadership, management and governance in particular.
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of governance standards by applying external knowledge and expertise to the strategic oversight and decision-making processes of the Corporation.
- Demonstrate and promote the highest standards in public life in accordance with the role of charitable trustee; the seven principles of public life as set out in Lord Nolan's Report on Standards in Public Life and the Corporation's Governor Code of Conduct.
- Regularly monitor the College's overall performance against key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Attend some public and private events at which stakeholders are present including student awards ceremonies, student and community centred events, shows and exhibitions.
- Governors must meet the Charities Act eligibility requirements.



# Person Specification

To support the ongoing successes and development across the College Group, we are seeking to appoint up to three inspirational Board members with specific experiences drawn from either **Further Education or Skills** (pedagogy of teaching and learning), **Finance** (Qualified Accountant), and/or leadership experience in **Digital**.

## Essential Experience

- Ability to work as part of a team to set and monitor strategic objectives for a large organisation.
- Ability to develop skills to assist the Board in setting and monitoring strategic objectives.
- Ability to absorb and analyse complex information.
- Awareness of standards in public life and public accountability and a determination to abide by them.
- Demonstration of analytical and problem-solving abilities.
- Willingness to develop knowledge of the responsibilities of a charitable trustee/company director.
- Willingness to complete appropriate induction and relevant training and development.

## Desirable Experience

- Experience of quality assurance and performance improvement strategies.
- Experience of industry and or finance.

## Personal Skills & Attributes

- Ability to attend evening meetings.
- Commitment to observing Standards in Public Life.

## Terms

**Remuneration** - this post is unremunerated, although sensible expenses will be reimbursed.

**Term** - initial appointment is for one year, subject to review and extension by a further three years (first term is typically four years), with an option for a further four year second term.

**Time Commitment** - approximately one day per month. The Corporation has five Board meetings a year, held on-site (usually on a Monday 4pm-7pm) and two annual strategic planning events off-site. Standing Committees (Audit, Capital and Estates, Search and Governance, Quality and Standards) meet once a term (three times a year).

**Checks** - all appointments are subject to satisfactory pre-employment references and DBS clearance.

## Timeline

The following timeline is indicative and should only be used as a guide. It may be subject to change.

Process	Date
Close for Applications	9.00am Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Interviews with Dodd Partners	Early to Mid - August 2024
Interviews with Nelson & Colne College Group	Late August 2024



## How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Dodd Partners on behalf of Nelson & Colne College Group. 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 within the Person Specification.
- A comprehensive CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- All applications should be emailed to Dodd Partners at your earliest convenience to [contactus@doddpartners.com](mailto:contactus@doddpartners.com), clearly marked with reference number DP3115

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](mailto:johndodd@doddpartners.com)

To find out more about Nelson & Colne College Group, please visit: [www.nelson.ac.uk](http://www.nelson.ac.uk)

