



Board of Management

Board Member

Information Pack

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Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of non-executive Board members for the Board of Management of West College Scotland.

As one of Scotland's largest Regional Colleges, with campuses at the heart of communities in Paisley, Greenock, and Clydebank, we provide education to some 20,000 students. We also provide training and skills provision for hundreds of local and national businesses with West College Scotland having a presence across six local authorities, fifteen towns and nearly fifty locations.

The College manages total funds of £54m and we employ around 1,000 staff. It makes us one of the region's largest employers and means our College is uniquely placed to help shape the educational landscape and contribute to the social and economic development of the west of Scotland and beyond.

A Scottish Funding Council review acknowledged the need for capital investment in our estate, especially at Greenock and Paisley, which is among the most acute in the entire sector. Our plans are not just to rebuild what we have but to create world-leading, technologically advanced, sustainable hubs for our local communities to access and for local businesses to utilise.

We are learner-centred. We are proud of the impact we have on our region and beyond, and we are passionate about making a difference. We have committed and innovative staff making continuous improvements.

We welcome applications from enthusiastic individuals who have, or can develop, the skills to deal with complex issues and promote high standards of governance. You do not need to be an expert in education or training to join our Board. You need an enquiring mind, an analytical approach with the capability of constructive challenge, and a commitment to helping our students thrive in the local and national economy. You will receive training and support to learn the new skills you may require to succeed in this rewarding role.

Further details on the requirements for the role can be found in the following pages. Thank you for your interest.

Dr Waiyin Hatton
Chair, Board of Management

West College Scotland Board of Management

The College is a registered charity and receives funding from primarily the Scottish Government. The Board of Management is accountable and responsible for overseeing the College's activities, determining its future direction and fostering an environment in which the College vision is achieved, and the potential of all learners is maximised. The Board must ensure sound governance in the use of its resources and compliance with the relevant legislation and other regulatory requirements.

Main duties of the board

- Provide leadership, direction, and support, setting the College's strategy and priorities.
- Promote commitment to the College values and ethos including equality and diversity.
- Ensure satisfactory delivery of the College's performance and financial objectives, high quality learning and outcomes, and a good learning experience.
- Be accountable to and maintain the trust of key stakeholders.
- Comply with relevant legal and financial requirements including the Scottish Public Finance Manual.
- Ensure identification and control of the main risks to delivery of the College's responsibilities and business objectives.
- Ensure staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge, culture and working environment.
- Adhere to the sector's Code of Good Governance and the College's relevant Financial Memorandum

The Board comprises up to 20 members as follows:

- The Chair, appointed by the Scottish Minister.
- The Principal.
- 2 members of staff elected to the Board (1 from the Teaching staff and 1 from the Support staff).
- 2 students nominated by the Students Association.
- 2 staff members nominated by the local Trade Unions (1 from Teaching staff and 1 from the Support Staff), to be in place by 31 March 2024.
- Up to 12 Non-Executive members, appointed through a recruitment and interview process and approved by the Scottish Minister.

Code of Good Governance

The College is required to comply with The *Code of Good Governance* as a condition of grant from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). It establishes standards of good governance practice for all college boards and provides the essential foundations for compliance within the legislative framework. The Code promotes accountability and continuous improvement in how the College is governed. The full code can be found here: [Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges - September 2022 \(westcollegescotland.ac.uk\)](https://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/code-of-good-governance-for-scotland-s-colleges-september-2022)

We value the significant contribution the board members make to governing our College and to the stewardship of taxpayer's money, ensuring its efficient and effective use. The Board is expected to innovate, pursue new opportunities and take measured risks in delivering what is best for their stakeholders.

The highest standards of governance and propriety are, therefore, expected of the board and its members.

We would love to hear from people from all walks of life, cultures, and backgrounds. What is important is that you share our passion for the value high quality education and training can bring. We want to create a Board of all the talents, including free-thinking people who bring fresh skillsets, approaches, ideas and other sector experience. We want board members who embrace equality and diversity.

The Board is especially keen to hear from those groups who are currently under-represented on Boards of Scottish public bodies. It is not essential that you live/work in areas where our campuses are based. You will, however, be expected to attend meetings and events in person.

Role of Board Member

The main duties of a Board are noted on page 4. As a Board Member, your overarching duty is to use your skills, knowledge, experience and time to work as best you can with your chair, fellow Board members and staff to ensure that the College fulfils its responsibilities. The power to make decisions and hold staff to account to deliver these responsibilities lies with the Board as a whole and not any individual member. As a Board member you will not be held personally liable for any decisions taken by the Board or College as long as any actions you take or decisions you make are done “honestly and in good faith”. The main duties of the role of a Board Member are described below:

1. **Governance** - to:
 - a) Lead the College for the benefit of its students, employees and other stakeholders.
 - b) Ensure compliance with all relevant legal and financial requirements.
 - c) Ensure, through the Executive Team, high quality and effective learning and curriculum aligned to strategic priorities.
 - d) Approve the strategic aims and objectives of the College for agreement annually with the SFC through the College Outcome Agreement.
 - e) Comply and agree with the College’s Code of Conduct.

2. **Contribute** - to the fulfilment of the Board’s duties, roles and responsibilities including those as an employer, which will comprise:
 - a) Strategy development and decision making.
 - b) Leadership.
 - c) Efficiency and effectiveness of the use of resources.
 - d) Financial management oversight.
 - e) Risk management and internal controls.
 - f) Stakeholder relationships.
 - g) Quality of the student experience.
 - h) Governance and open and transparent decision-making processes.

3. **Participate** - in the business of the Board, including:
 - a) Preparing for and attending Board meetings.
 - b) Contributing to decisions, questioning, and as necessary, challenging proposals constructively.
 - c) Chairing or participating in at least one Board Committee.
 - d) Attending and participating in strategic planning, training and other development events.
 - e) Supporting student and staff events, e.g. graduations.
 - f) Representing the Board externally where required.

All members should exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the College as a whole rather than as a representative of any constituency. Further information about the role of Boards and Board Members can be found on the College Development Network website at: <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/>

As West College Scotland is a registered charity, you will need to be aware of your role as a Charity Trustee. You are referred to the Office of Scottish Charity Regulator’s guidance for charity trustees which can be found at <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/managing-a-charity-guidance/>.

Conduct and Ethical Standards

In carrying out this public service role, you will be expected to uphold high ethical standards of integrity and probity and adhere to the nine principles of public life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (based on the Nolan Principles). At all times you will act in good faith and in the best interests of the learners and the college. You are referred to the Standards Commissions Members' Model Code of Conduct which can be found at

<https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/codes-of-conduct/members-model-code-of-conduct>. This Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of those involved in public life in Scotland and you should review this prior to submitting your application. **The College Code of Conduct** is based on this Model Code and is available on the College website at <http://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/about-us/board-of-management/>

Fit and Proper Person Test

Scottish Ministers and the public must feel confident that people appointed to Board of public bodies are fit and proper persons to take up these positions. In the context of board member appointments, a Fit and Proper Person is an individual who is suitable for appointment because they meet the requirement of the role, and their past or present activities and/or behaviours mean that they are suitable for appointment.

Register of Interest and Conflict of Interest

Your current employment or other position you may hold may give rise to a potential conflict of interest which could affect your suitability for appointment. It is important that you consider this possibility before making your application. We will seek confirmation that applicants have no inappropriate or unmanageable conflicts of interest in respect of appointment to the Board. Please let us know in your application of any potential conflict of interest. If you want to know more information on conflicts of interest, prior to submitting your application, please contact Susan McDonald, Governance Manager, susan.mcdonald@wcs.ac.uk. The College maintains and publicly discloses a Register of Interests of members of the Board of Management.

Training and Induction

As a Board member you have a duty to continue to develop your knowledge and skills as appropriate, and you can expect to be supported. If appointed, you will be provided with appropriate training and induction designed to help you perform effectively in your role. There will be an initial induction session in the College, which will be supplemented with any further induction/development required to assist you in your role. You will be required to attend induction training that is provided nationally through the College Development Network within 6 months of taking up appointment.

Being on a College Board is a multi-faceted role and a good Board member never stops learning and building their knowledge and expertise. The sector has a Development Framework to support Board members with written material, newsletters, seminars, checklists, and workshops at college, regional and national level covering the four areas of required development: non-executive skills; organisational knowledge; team working and knowledge of the external environment.

Time Commitment

The Board meets at least 5 times during each academic session. If additional meetings are required, you will be given adequate notice to allow you time to make any necessary arrangements. Meetings are normally held on a Monday, starting at 4.00 p.m. and usually last for 2 hours. The Board meetings are held on each of the three campuses, Clydebank, Paisley, and Greenock. A calendar of meeting dates, times and venue will be provided before the start of each academic session.

Board members are appointed to the membership of a Committee of the Board. These meet a minimum of 4 times during the year. They are normally held at 4.00 p.m., usually last 2 hours, and are held virtually via Teams. You will also be provided with an introduction to the Committee and its role when you join.

Members are expected to attend strategic and effectiveness review meetings of the Board, and are encouraged to attend development events, both in-house and externally provided, as appropriate. Board members will also be invited to other college events such as Graduations, Student Shows and other engagement events.

The time commitment for the role of Board member, including preparing for and attending meetings, is around 12 days per annum.

Length of Term of Appointment

The length of term will be for a period of up to four years. Appointment may be renewed for up to a further 4 years by the Minister subject to approval by the Board based on evidence of effective performance.

Remuneration

There is no remuneration for the post of Board Member. The College will, however, meet reasonable expenses incurred as a result of carrying out the duties of the appointment.

Application and Assessment Information

Please read these notes carefully before you apply.

1. Your Application

The information in your application is important in determining whether you will proceed through the assessment stages conducted by the selection panel.

All Board members need to have skills and personal qualities which will enable them to make a good contribution to the Board, but these do not have to have been gained by working at a management post or at a senior/strategic level. You may have gained these skills through being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or through your personal experience. We are looking for people with enquiring minds and who can communicate ideas and thoughts to others.

The Board is particularly keen to welcome applications from people local to our main campuses, although it is not essential that you live/work in areas where our campuses are based.

For further information about the role, or if you have any general queries, or require this information in a different format, please do not hesitate to contact Susan McDonald, Governance Manager on 01475 554032 or at susan.mcdonald@wcs.ac.uk

If you would like an informal chat with Dr Waiyin Hatton, Chair of the Board of Management, please do not hesitate to email the Governance Manager and one can be arranged.

Please submit:

- a. A covering letter and CV, indicating:
 - i. why you wish to join the WCS Board;
 - ii. how your expertise and experience match the assessment criteria;
 - iii. indicate any potential areas of conflicts of interest and how they will be managed;
 - iv. Names and addresses of 2 people whom we can approach for a reference
- b. Self-declaration Form (**Appendix A**)
- c. The Equal Opportunity Monitoring form (**Appendix B**)

Please email above to: Susan.McDonald@wcs.ac.uk. If you require to submit your application in any another format, please contact Susan. The Equal Opportunity Monitoring Information form is not seen by the selection panel and will not be used to assess your suitability for appointment.

NOTE Closing date for receipt of applications is **Tuesday 2 April 2024**
Interview date – **Tuesday 23 April 2024**

2. Selection Panel Evaluation

The Selection Panel must provide enough information and evidence to Scottish Ministers to enable them to feel confident that the person they are appointing to the Board of the public body is suitable to take up the appointment. Please see section on Fit and Proper Person test above.

- The panel will seek evidence provided by you that: you have the skills, knowledge and experience required for the role.
- You understand the work of the College and the nature of the appointment and that you are not aware of having committed any offence or performed any act incompatible with the position that you are applying for.
- You can give the time required for the role.
- You are not disqualified on any grounds from being appointed to this Board may be sought at interview.

By virtue of submitting an application you are declaring that the information provided is, to the best of your knowledge and belief, true and complete.

If appointed to the Board, you will be asked to sign your agreement to abide by terms and conditions set out in the letter of appointment, which includes agreeing to abide by the College's Code of Conduct.

3. Valuing Equality and Diversity

West College Scotland is committed to diversity and equality. We value the benefits of having different points of view and experiences represented on the Board. WCS is an Equal Opportunities Employer and applicants must embrace equality and diversity. You are requested, therefore, to complete and return the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Information form (Appendix A) with your application.

We are keen to encourage applications from groups currently under-represented on Scotland's public bodies, such as women, people with a disability, people aged under 50, and black, Asian, and ethnic minority applicants. As a Disability Confident organisation, we offer a guaranteed interview scheme for applicants who have declared a disability and who meet the essential requirements of the role.

4. How we will handle your application

The panel will invite to interview those applicants who meet the criteria.

Applicants invited to interview will be advised of the membership of the Selection Panel in their invitation letter and will be asked to declare if and how they know any of the Panel. Applicants not selected for the interview stage will be advised of the outcome of their applications in writing (normally via email). If invited to the interview stage and you have a disability, it will be at this point that you should let us know (contact details will be provided in your invitation to next stage) if you would like particular arrangements made.

The Board of Management will then appoint successful applicants following approval from the Scottish Ministers. If you are successful, you will be invited in writing to accept the appointment.

We will comply with the General Data Protection Regulations and will not retain your personal data any longer than is necessary for the completion of this appointment process. Any statistical data retained will be anonymised.

5. Appointment Timetable

The table below shows an indicative timeline for the appointments process.

Stage in Progress	Timescale
Closing date for applications	Tues 2 April 2024
Outcome of shortlist to be relayed to applicants	w/e 12 April 24
Date for interviews	Tues 23 April 2024
Date by which the Chair will make recommendation to the Scottish Ministers for appointment	w/c 29 April 2024
It is hoped to have approval from the Minister in time for successful candidates to join the Board of Management	24 June 2024

6. Interviews/Expenses

Applicants can claim for reasonable expenses incurred in attending for interview, including dependent carer expenses. It is expected that the most efficient and economic means of travel will be used, and reimbursement will normally be restricted to that amount.

7. Vetting

Appointments are subject to satisfactory vetting. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2003 (as amended) applies to roles where there may be substantial contact with young or vulnerable people. Through appointment to West College Scotland Board of Management, you will be required to complete a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme application before taking up your appointment.

8. Assessment Criteria - Evidence Sought

Essential Skills & Experience

Analytical – ability to analyse complex material and to reach sound conclusions based on this analysis.

Question – ability to question constructively within a team environment.

Communication – ability to communicate effectively with a diverse range of stakeholders and build effective networks.

Strategic Thinking – ability to contribute to the development of the Board’s strategic thinking.

Education Landscape – an interest in education.

Desirable

Public Service Reform – an understanding of the Scottish Government’s policy ambitions for public services in general and post-16 education in particular

Corporate Governance – an understanding of corporate governance in public, private or charity sectors and of risk management (prior Board experience is not required).

Context – an understanding of the needs of the economy, employers, communities and learners and the challenges of a political environment, at a national and regional level.

Appendix A - Self-declaration form (attached as a separate document for ease of reference)

Criteria for Disqualification - Persons Not Eligible for Appointment

The following provides the basis for disqualification and non-eligibility for appointment to the role of the board member.

Paragraph 6(1) and 6(2) of schedule 2B to the 2005 Act, as inserted by section 11(2) of the 2013 Act

6 (1) A person is not eligible for appointment as a member of the Board if the person:

- has within 5 years of the date on which the appointment would take effect, been sentenced (following conviction for an offence in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Irish Republic) to imprisonment for a period of not less than 3 months, whether suspended or not, without the option of a fine;
- is an undischarged bankrupt; or
- has been removed from office under section 24 of the 1992 Act (in relation to any college) or section 23Q of this Act (in relation to any regional Board).

(2) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b), “undischarged bankrupt” means a person:

- whose estate has been sequestrated and who has not been discharged (or against whom a bankruptcy order has been made and is still in force);
- who has granted a trust deed for, or made a composition or arrangement with, creditors (and has not been discharged in respect of it);
- who is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, made under the Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985 or the Insolvency Act 1986;
- who is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking entered into under either of those Acts;
- who has been adjudged bankrupt (and has not been discharged); or
- who is subject to any other kind of order, arrangement or undertaking analogous to those described in paragraphs (a) to (d), anywhere in the world.

By submitting my completed application, I am declaring:

- **That the information provided is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and complete.**
- **That I am able to meet the time commitment for the role.**
- **That I will work within the Principles of Public Life in Scotland (Nolan).**
- **That I agree to be bound by the Board Members’ Code of Conduct and other relevant legislator or regulatory framework as is required by the Board of Management.**
- **That I have no unmanageable conflict of interests in respect of the appointment.**
- **That I have read and understood the criteria for disqualification above and that I am not disqualified from taking up a public appointment**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Background Information

Colleges in Scotland

Scotland's colleges play a crucial role in the delivery of education and training to young people and adults of all ages and are a key means of improving the economic and social wellbeing of the people of Scotland. Colleges offer a wide range of qualifications and courses at further and higher education levels across a diverse curriculum, including vocational education and training - to a very broad range of people and communities. With enrolments of over 200,000 annually and a geographical coverage that extends from all the major towns and cities to remote rural areas, the sector is central to the Government's economic growth, education, employability, and social inclusion agendas. Further information on this regional structure and the sector in general can be found on the Colleges Scotland website at the following link: <http://collegesscotland.ac.uk/>

The Scottish Government's reform of the College Sector involved an overhaul of college governance, with a range of measures aimed at improving the accountability of colleges, commensurate with the significant amount of public funding they receive. A key measure is the introduction of a more open and fair processes for making Board appointments and the Ministerial appointment of Board chairs which is now via a regulated public appointments process. Additionally, the Office of National Statistics reclassified the colleges in Scotland so that they are treated as part of central government for financial budgeting and reporting purposes. Funding is allocated to the College via the Scottish Funding Council.

West College Scotland Region Context

As a regional college, West College Scotland wants to use our enhanced influence to make a difference. We want to strengthen our innovative partnerships with employers, schools, and other stakeholders to encourage economic growth, employability, and progression for our young people. We strive to widen access to education, improve attainment and enhance social mobility across the West region. We have well established and productive employer partnerships with both large companies and local SME's (Small and Medium size Enterprises). The College is also ambitious to win a share of international markets and has entered into partnerships with colleges across the world, including in Vietnam, Malaysia, China, India and the EU. For more information on the College, please see: 'Collective Ambition, Pride and Passion, Inspirational and Innovative', Strategy 2019-2025:

<https://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/media/213490/west-college-scotland-strategy-2019-web.pdf>. Following a recent Board Strategic Development Day in January 2024 this is being refreshed to affirm its ambitions to develop WCS whilst addressing the ongoing serious financial budget cuts.

West College Scotland

Since its creation in 2013, West College Scotland (WCS) has been a leader in the country's education landscape. Employing nearly 1,000 people, we support 20,000+ students every year through full-time, part-time study, skills provision and training. We are also the largest provider of online learning in Scotland. WCS is at the forefront of college provision, with the ambition, talent, and assets to help shape the future of education and skills in the West of Scotland and beyond.

