

Annex H: Template for producing a self-assessment on management and governance: further education colleges and sixth form colleges

Provider's name: Walsall College

Provider's UKPRN: 10007315

Your management and governance arrangements

Briefly describe here your management and governance arrangements for your higher education provision.

On average, around 550 Walsall College Level 3 students progress to University each year. For some students, leaving home and moving away is not an option and even regional universities can present a challenge in terms of commuting, when for example, a student may have childcare demands or a part-time job. For this particular cohort, Walsall College offers progression into university level learning across many subject areas. The College therefore, is very much targeting to support residents of Walsall and the wider black country area, in providing an alternative to university three-year degree programmes, which often fail to cater for those needing more accessible modes of study. Through our partnership with London College of Contemporary Arts (LCCA), the College is able to offer a number of its higher education courses to students based in and around central London.

HE provision is well-established in the College through direct HEFCE funding for a range of Pearson Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Diploma programmes, and there is a growing portfolio of Level 6, in partnership (and validated by) Birmingham City University. There is provision for PGCE courses through franchised provision with the University of Warwick. Walsall College does not offer provision at HE level for international students.

In 2017/18, 235 students enrolled to higher education courses based at Walsall College in comparison with approximately 4000 FE students and 1400 apprentices enrolled at the College. Our partnership with LCCA added a further 225 HE students to our provision, equating to 460 students. Approximately 40 out of around 300 lecturers currently teach Higher Education qualifications.

In 2016/17, the College turned over £32.1m with reference to the final financial statements. The College generated 83% of its income from the main further education funding bodies. Higher education provision based at the College generates around £1.5m with a further £1.7m set to be generated through our partnership with LCCA. The College has generated £1.5m of cash in the year and at 31 July 2017, has liquid funds of £6.2m. The College's financial health is 'Outstanding' as assessed by the ESFA.

The responsibility for the strategic direction of all College provision including Higher Education lies with the Corporation of the College (Governors), which receives regular reports on the provision through the College Principal and Chief Executive.

The College's Senior Management Team (SMT) is the body within the College with overall responsibility for the management of the Higher Education. The College's Academic Regulations for HE and any proposed amendments thereto, are approved by the College's Senior Management Team through the Higher Education Management Board. There is a 'link Governor' for HE, who regularly attends the termly HE Quality Summit meetings, which is chaired by the Deputy Principal to formalise quality assurance interventions for College qualifications, such as student outcomes, assessment and verification, equality and diversity, safeguarding, stakeholder voice and staff development.

The College employs two senior managers to oversee the Higher Education provision: the Deputy Principal, Delivery and Success and the Director of Quality and Higher Education. We are currently in the process of recruiting a Curriculum Manager for HE.

The College consists of five Curriculum Cluster areas, all managed by a Head of Curriculum Cluster (HoCC) and supported by Curriculum Managers. Higher Education programmes are currently offered in four areas, namely Creative Industries, Business and Computing, Services to People and Construction, Engineering and Science. In addition, the Professional Development department at Walsall College leads the delivery of higher-level teacher training activity in partnership with Warwick University. There is ambition to redevelop HE provision within the Cluster of Care, Health and Public Services, and after centre approval with University of Worcester, further exploration of a Foundation Degree in Early Years, and course approval for the BA Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (CDMA) concluded during 2017-18. Where the College delivers in partnership with a Degree Awarding Institution, programme design and development are determined by the institution's own management and leadership teams, who take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.

Higher Education provision takes place on College sites and is delivered in parallel with Further Education courses. Heads of Curriculum Cluster have responsibility to ensure all aspects of quality assurance processes are effective and fully embedded in the design, development and approval of all programmes. Curriculum Managers (CMs) are responsible for academic and resource planning to ensure relevancy and currency.

The College is continuing its formal partnership with the LCCA in 2018/19, the purpose of which is to provide students with an opportunity to undertake Pearson HNC/HND courses in subject areas such as Creative Arts, Business, Business and Hospitality that are delivered at LCCA premises in central London. Opportunities are available for staff and students based at Walsall to share projects, resources and events will also enhance the college-based student experience. The College applies its own HE Academic Regulations to this partnership as well as the key features of the HE Quality Enhancement Cycle and Governance. To ensure bespoke management of this partnership and contract, the College has appointed a designated lead role to oversee aspects of quality assurance and compliance. This person reports to the College's own HE Management Board and Governance.

There is more work to do to fully analyse the makeup of those students applying for this provision, however, current indicators demonstrate that we are successfully attracting so-called non-traditional (non A Level/non BTEC) adult students. The College is expecting 400 students to participate in 2018/19, and this is set to increase for 2019/20 with the aim to rise to 550 by 2021/22. The relationship the College has with the LCCA is a formal partnership, delivering Pearson Higher National Diplomas (HND) at level 4 and 5.

The Higher Education Management Board meets six times each year to act as the strategic Board charged with reviewing all aspects of Higher Education provision at Walsall College. This extends to the review of HE performance through success data, Course Reviews, Gradebook, External Examiner Reports, student surveys and Student Voice.

It comprises of the Vice Principal, Deputy Principal, Student Representative, Director of Quality and Higher Education, Teaching and Learning Manager, Heads of Clusters, Director of Student Journey, Director of Information Services, Head of Employer Responsive Delivery, and Head of Marketing.

In addition, minutes from HE Tutor Committee meetings are reviewed and the sharing of good practice across the College is discussed at a strategic level. This Board also discusses and puts forward recommendations for new programme validations and the marketing of HE programmes.

The HE Tutor Committee comprises of tutors and managers involved in the delivery of Higher Education courses at the College, meet. The HE Tutor Committee meetings generate agendas which inform recorded summary notes and actions, which are followed up at each meeting. These meetings are chaired by the Director of Quality and HE. The role also ensures continuity across the leadership and management structure by also attending the HE Management Board meetings as well as Quality

and Standards Committee, Senior Management Team meetings, Periodic Reviews and Assessment Board meetings. There are ten set dates meeting dates across the academic year.

At the HE Tutor Committee meetings, the prime focus remains the experience of our students, and areas for development are reviewed in order to create a culture of constant improvement leading to increased student achievement and satisfaction. The meetings also enable the HE delivery teams to come together as a community, sharing good practice as research in action, supporting new tutors/internal verifiers and being supported by cross- College expertise such as UCAS applications and finance experts.

The HE Assessment Board is held annually towards the end of programme delivery, and includes consideration for all HE courses including partnership delivery where it will receive and take note of grades and reports as provided. The board includes external and HE student membership to strengthen validation and any recommendations made. The College is planning to introduce subject area termly HE Assessment Boards for 2018/19, which will increase scrutiny and intervention opportunities on a more regular basis.

The College's Academic Regulations govern the principal mechanisms for the delivery and management of academic standards for the College's Higher Education (HE) course provision at Level 4 and above. These Academic Regulations incorporate both the general regulations that apply to students as well as regulations that apply to student admissions and the conduct of student assessment, progression and appeals.

Self-assessment of your management and governance arrangements

Explain here how your management and governance arrangements for your HE provision are adequate and effective. An arrangement is 'adequate' if it is capable of delivering a stated or implied objective and 'effective' if it is delivering its stated or implied objective.

The policies and procedures of the Corporation are brought together in the Governance at Walsall College 2017 document, which is revised regularly and approved by the Corporation. Previous versions of this document has supported the Governors at Walsall College for over a decade. All Governors are required to adhere to it. In particular, Governors are required to agree to and sign the Code of Conduct (included in the Governance at Walsall College document).

The College's accountability for Governance and management arrangements is highly effective because they are able to outline the seven principles of public life, detailing expectations around selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Governors are very well informed about all aspects of college performance. They use their extensive expertise and experience extremely well to support and challenge leaders and managers to maintain high standards and implement improvements effectively. They have a clear commitment to providing an excellent experience for students. They use the 'Walk-through' process to visit sessions and meet staff and students frequently. They use students' views very effectively to review the quality of provision and make improvements.

Governors use a clear framework of well-establish committee meetings to analyse achievement data rigorously to determine the effectiveness of leaders' actions to maintain improvement throughout the College. College governors are advocates for the College and strive to ensure that students receive the very best education in a well-managed, well-resourced learning environment.

Outstanding leadership and management promote an ambitious vision and sharply defined strategic direction, which is underpinned by a consistent and sustained approach to improving outcomes for all students. The College vision, articulated through the dedication and professionalism of our people, financial stability and quality of provision and services, is firmly rooted in highly ambitious success measures. The College is embedded centrally within its community and works in meaningful partnership with key organisations for the benefit of its students and to promote the regeneration and prosperity of the Borough.

Quality assurance and quality improvement arrangements are outstanding and provide a highly effective framework so that leaders, managers and governors have a precise understanding of the College's effectiveness and where to target actions for further improvement. The College has a vibrant and deeply embedded Student Voice infrastructure that generates meaningful and wide-ranging feedback that informs self-assessment and sustainable planning for quality improvement.

Leaders and managers take seriously the promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity, which is intrinsic to College values and highly regarded by all staff throughout the organisation. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies maintain high expectations for all students regardless of their background or protected characteristics and gaps in performance inform robust actions for improvement. Positive Community and British Values are deeply embedded in College culture and revisited regularly throughout the student journey. Staff and students benefit from high quality training that gives them confidence in taking part in healthy debate regarding radicalisation and extremism and they know how to raise concerns when necessary. The safeguarding of our students is of paramount importance and we are proud in knowing that students feel safe at the College as well as at our partner organisations and employer premises.

Public interest governance principles

Explain here how your governing documents uphold the public interest governance principles relevant to your application (see list of principles below). Where your chosen code of governance does not meet all of the relevant public interest governance principles you will need to demonstrate how you meet the remaining principles.

Standard public interest governance principles: applicable to all providers

Academic freedom: Academic staff at an English higher education provider have freedom within the law:
(a) to question and test received wisdom; and
(b) to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions;

without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider.

Reference and guidance regarding academic freedom has been added to the Staff Code of Conduct, which forms part of our governing documents, which uphold public interest and governance principles. These have been based on the University and College Union (UCU) statement on academic freedom.

Accountability: The provider operates openly, honestly, accountably and with integrity and demonstrates the values appropriate to be recognised as an English higher education provider.

The policies and procedures of the Corporation are brought together in the Governance at Walsall College document, which is revised regularly and approved by the Corporation. All Governors are required to adhere to it. In particular, Governors are required to agree to and sign the Code of Conduct (included in the Governance at Walsall College document).

The College's accountability outlines the seven principles of public life, detailing expectations around selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Student engagement: The governing body ensures that all students have opportunities to engage with the governance of the provider, and that this allows for a range of perspectives to have influence.

The Quality and Standards Committee and Student Voice Committee, is chaired by designated Governors who oversee all matters pertaining to student engagement. Such meetings occur every term and matters and actions are shared at senior management meetings.

The Corporation ensures that there are effective underpinning policies and systems, which facilitate the student voice.

Academic governance: The governing body receives and tests assurance that academic governance is adequate and effective through explicit protocols with the Senate/Academic Board (or equivalent).

Working closely with the Principal, the Corporation is responsible for approving the College's Mission Statement, establishing College strategy, maintaining the overall framework of policies and procedures within which the College operates and monitoring College performance. Governors help the College maintain a long-term focus whilst working on its shorter-term goals and plans. The Principal, however, is clearly and directly accountable to the governors for the performance of the College in both academic and financial matters.

Risk management: The provider operates comprehensive corporate risk management and control arrangements

The College operates a generally cautious approach to risk management, in line with the Corporation approved policy. The Risk Management policy forms part of the

<p>(including for academic risk) to ensure the sustainability of the provider's operations, and its ability to continue to comply with all of its conditions of registration.</p>	<p>College's internal control and corporate governance arrangements. It explains the College's approach to risk management and documents the Corporation's roles and responsibilities, as well as those of other key parties. The key aspects of the risk management process, including reporting, are outlined. This includes the ways in which the effectiveness of the internal control processes are evaluated.</p> <p>The Corporation has responsibility for overseeing risk management in the College as a whole. Governors discharge this responsibility by reviewing risk management, including the risks identified on the risk register as being scored eight or higher, at each of the termly Audit Committee meetings. There is an annual review and report on Risk Management to Corporation every July.</p>
<p>Value for money: The governing body ensures that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to provide transparency about value for money for students and (where a provider has access to the student support system or to grant funding) for taxpayers.</p>	<p>Under its Financial Memorandum with Funding Agencies, the Corporation has overarching responsibility for obtaining value for money. This responsibility is confirmed annually through the Statement of the Responsibilities of the Members of the Corporation in the college's annual financial statements. In practice, responsibility for obtaining value for money is delegated to the Principal and the Senior Management Team.</p> <p>The Principal has delegated responsibility for obtaining value for money to the Director of Operations and Resources , whose role is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the value for money Policy. • Ensure that value for money is embedded within the College's management and administrative processes • Designate a member of the Audit Committee to take the lead role in the review and monitoring of progress in value for money matters.
<p>Freedom of speech: The governing body takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured within the provider.</p>	<p>The Governance at Walsall College document outlines the College's commitment to ensuring that the appropriate recognition of the right to free speech is secured and embedded in the College's mission and values.</p>
<p>Governing body: The size, composition, diversity, skills mix, and terms of office of the governing body is appropriate for the nature, scale and complexity of the provider.</p>	<p>The Corporation represents a range of members that are able to demonstrate diverse skills, attributes, experiences and backgrounds this offers a rich pool of resource, that are exceptionally well placed to support and challenge the College. In regards to the monitoring of the achievement of key performance targets set for College Management, the Corporation are able to draw on their diversity to align specific Governors appropriate for the context of provision.</p> <p>There are six specialist committees (Learning & Quality, Student Voice, Finance & Resources, Audit, Search & Standards and Remuneration). The specialist committees</p>

	<p>have been established to examine key areas like college finances, human resource management, and the quality of college performance. They report their findings to full Corporation. The Corporation meets six times a year. Each governor is a member of the Corporation, and of one or more of the committees. The frequency of which committees meet varies.</p>
<p>Fit and proper: Members of the Governing Body, those with senior management responsibilities, and individuals exercising control or significant influence over the provider, are fit and proper persons.</p>	<p>Corporation members are carefully selected and reviewed in terms of their appropriateness to the role of the Governor and that they do not present a conflict of interest or risk to students or to public funds.</p> <p>The national guidelines on the responsibilities of Corporations are very clear that neither Corporations nor individual governors, in their capacity as governors, should seek to intervene in the day-to-day operational management of the College, which is the responsibility of the Principal. If any Governor has concerns about an aspect of the operation of the College, there are defined routes for dealing with the matter, explained in the Governance at Walsall College document.</p> <p>New members are required by law to sign a Declaration of Interests form detailing any interests or connections, which might impair the “independent exercise of their judgement, (for example contacts with College suppliers or any other form of “vested interest”). The form also requires declaration of any criminal conviction.</p>
<p>Additional public interest governance principle: providers authorised with degree awarding powers</p>	
<p>Records: Where degree awarding powers are solely contained in the provider’s governing documents, and no order either under section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under HERA exists, the provisions setting out those powers must be retained and may not be altered without the consent of the OfS</p>	<p>Walsall College does not have degree awarding powers.</p>
<p>Additional public interest governance principles: providers in receipt of financial support</p>	
<p>Independent members of the governing body: There must be at least one external member of the governing body who is independent of the provider, and whose term of office is normally limited to a maximum of three terms of three years or two terms of four years. For providers with large governing bodies, or more complex legal forms, additional independent members may be appropriate.</p>	<p>The Corporation consists of 16 Governors, of which 11 are external to Walsall College in addition to 5 members that are made up from College managers, staff and students.</p> <p>Governors are appointed for a term of three years.</p>
<p>Regularity, propriety and value for Money: The governing body ensures that there are adequate and effective</p>	<p>The respective responsibilities of the governing body and the Principal are set out in the College’s Articles of Government. Within this framework, the governing body</p>

arrangements in place to ensure public funds are managed appropriately, in line with the conditions of grant and the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money, and to protect the interests of taxpayers and other stakeholders. This also applies to any funds passed to another entity for the provision of facilities or learning and teaching, or for research to be undertaken.

shall require the Principal to take personal responsibility, which shall not be delegated, to assure them that there is compliance with the Financial Memorandum and all terms and conditions referred to above. As accounting officer, the Principal may be required to appear before the Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts, on matters relating to the College's use of public funds and College funds.

Whatever decisions Governors take at meetings of the Corporation and its committees must be for the benefit of the College as a whole and not for any improper purpose, or for personal motive. The "benefit of the College" can be taken to mean, first and foremost, the interests of its students and other users of the College's services, and the safeguarding of public funds. Governors should have regard to those interests, and must not allow any sectional interest to take precedence. Each member of the Corporation shall act in the best interests of the Corporation and accordingly shall not be bound in speaking and voting by mandates given by any other body or person.

Governors are collectively responsible for observing the duties set out in the Financial Memorandum, which the College has entered into with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as a condition of receiving public funds.

The major financial responsibilities of the Corporation are to ensure the solvency of the College, the stewardship of public funds and assets, securing value for money and accounting for the funds, which have been spent. Governors approve the College's mission and strategies and ensure resources are effectively and appropriately deployed to implement the strategies.

Whatever delegation it makes to the Principal for the management of the College, the Corporation's responsibility is absolute.