

CO-OPTED COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

RESPONSIBLE TO:	Chair of the Committee
TERM OF OFFICE:	4 years
APPOINTMENT:	Appointed by the Corporation Board
TIME COMMITMENT:	Prepare and attend 3 – 5 committee meetings each year plus induction and continuing professional development
ROLE TYPE:	Voluntary, expenses paid ¹

Introduction

Preston College is a technical specialist college which takes pride in supporting learners in achieving the qualifications and outcomes they need, whether that be career advancement, further study or preparation for employment. The Governing Body (the Board), is an independent body consisting of up to 21 governors; the Principal and Chief Executive, independent governors, staff governors and student governors. Committee terms of reference also allow for the appointment of Co-opted Members.

Main Purpose of the Role – Co-opted Members

The role of the Co-opted Member is to bring an external perspective to the work of the Corporation and to contribute specific professional expertise to the committee to which they are appointed.

A Co-opted Member is a person appointed by the governing body to a committee because, in the opinion of the governing body, they have the knowledge, experience and skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the College, through that particular committee. The appointment of a Co-opted Member could resolve a knowledge, experience or skills gap in that committee's membership or provide additional oversight.

Co-opted members play their part by:

- preparing, attending and actively participating in committee meetings (by applying external knowledge and expertise);
- contributing to the Board's development and monitoring of the College's strategic plan as relevant to the committee they are a member of;
- taking an active role in ensuring that the committee/s, to which they are appointed, fulfils its responsibilities as defined in its Terms of Reference;
- providing support and constructive challenge to the Executive Leadership Team and College management;
- taking part in the Committee's annual self-assessment and its overall contribution to the role of governance within the college and taking part in the external governance reviews as required;

¹ Please refer to the Governor Expenses Policy for more details

- ensuring the views of staff, learners and other stakeholders are considered during decision making;
- abiding by the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#) and the Code of Conduct for Corporation members and Co-opted Members;
- attending induction and training events as required;
- being an ambassador for the College and the transforming power of further education.

Whilst Co-opted Members are not members of the Governing body or trustees, appointment as a Co-opted member to a College is a public appointment.

Time commitment, practical requirements and support provided

Co-opted Members are normally appointed for a four year term. Co-opted members would need time to prepare for and attend c. three to five committee meetings (dependent on which committee) in each academic year. Some co-opted members might be appointed to more than one committee. Meetings are normally held in the evening, with the occasional meeting or training session in the afternoon. Meetings are usually held either at Preston College. Some committees sometimes meet remotely (Zoom).

We recognise that Co-opted Members will join the committees with varying skills, knowledge and experience and the College offers bespoke induction sessions and ongoing flexible continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities. Induction and training is a flexible mix of onsite and online, including webinars and video conferences.

It is important that Co-opted Members have an understanding of life at the College for learners and staff. Co-opted Members are invited to engage with staff and learners at governance meetings and events e.g. student performances and staff awards.

Restrictions

Co-opted Members cannot be appointed as chairs of committees and cannot serve on the College's Senior Post Holder Remuneration Committee.

Co-opted members can participate in interview panel for potential candidates for the Corporation Board in an advisory capacity.

In all other respects co-opted members are full members of the committee they are appointed to.

Eligibility

As the role of a Co-opted Member is a public appointment, the eligibility requirements of members of the Governing Body as outlined in the College's Instrument and Articles also apply to Co-opted Members. Appointment of Co-opted Members is subject to the College's completion of compliance checks. Co-opted Members will be required to make a declaration of eligibility and interest and agree to abide by the College's Code of Conduct for Corporation Members and Co-opted Members on appointment and annually.

Person specification

1. Co-opted Members should have the ability to analyse written, verbal and numerical information and use this information to:
 - ask questions of management;
 - make decisions and suggestions;
 - review progress against targets and objectives.
2. Co-opted Members should have the ability to plan at a strategic level and;
 - consider the consequences of decision making;
 - appreciate the bigger picture.
3. Co-opted Members should be able to build strong working relationships with governors and management and:
 - ask questions and challenge constructively;
 - support and hold to account the Executive Leadership Team;
 - work collaboratively by supporting colleagues and taking collective responsibility for Committee decisions;
 - demonstrate the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#) and the [College's values](#).
4. Co-opted Members should have the ability to apply the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion into every strand of the Committee's decision making process. Co-opted Members should understand the current issues and the potential impact of inequality and lack of diversity.

Equality and Diversity Statement

The College recognises its responsibility to ensure that all students and staff are treated with Dignity and respect and that equality, diversity and inclusion are promoted throughout the organisation.

Recruitment for positions in the College will be carried out in a manner which accords with best equal opportunities practice. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on the person specification and applicants should bear this in mind when preparing their applications and completing the application form.

Representation and addressing skills gaps

The Board is mindful that a successful board has an appropriate mix of governors with diverse skills, experience and backgrounds. The Board is looking for people who are enthusiastic about education and good governance and will widen the Committee's perspective when discussing College matters and making decisions. The Board also values the diversity of our learners and staff, who come from a variety of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. The Board is determined to reflect this diversity amongst our Governing Body and its co-opted members and encourages people from a range of backgrounds and experiences to apply. The Board is particularly looking for governors and co-opted members with experience of: working/involvement in FE or education sector, governance, business, audit, risk or estates management.

Safeguarding Learners Statement

Preston College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff to share this commitment. All Preston College authorised personnel are required to undertake mandatory Safeguarding training. The successful candidate for this appointment will be required to apply for Enhanced Disclosure for regulated activity through the Disclosure and Barring Service. As co-opted members are volunteers, there will be no charge for this service. Further information on the Disclosure process can be found at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

The College's Values and Behaviours

Welcoming and inclusive - we believe in making sure that all learners, staff and visitors to the College feel welcomed and valued at all times.

Supportive and compassionate - we believe in the importance of being reassuring, encouraging and caring towards our College community.

Aspirational for our learners, ourselves and each other - we believe in being ambitious in the way we work and promoting this with our learners.

Act with integrity and transparency - we believe in acting honestly at all times, and having open and transparent communications.

Be accountable - we believe in the importance of taking ownership of our actions, and expect others to act similar.