



Board of Governors

Application Pack

October 2020

Introduction

West Lothian College is an award-winning provider of further and higher education based in Livingston. It is well-known and widely acknowledged for successful partnerships with employers, business organisations, national education and skills agencies, universities, West Lothian Council and third sector organisations.

West Lothian College is a welcoming, bright and modern learning environment. It is an essential provider of a wide range of courses all focused on developing relevant skills for employment, to help students in their future career or to enhance current career prospects for those who are already working.

The college's vision is of a highly skilled, enterprising and resilient workforce. We are looking for one new member who shares this vision and can contribute at a strategic level to the work of the Board.

To complement the current skill set of the Board this vacancy is for an individual with a business background in the private sector. The Board would particularly welcome applications from individuals who have strategic oversight of IT.

The Board is especially keen to hear from those groups who are currently under-represented on Boards of Scottish Public Bodies such as disabled people and ethnic minorities.

We have prepared this information pack to explain a bit more about the nature of the role, and how decisions are made on appointments to the Board.

The pack includes information on:

1. Information on West Lothian College
2. The Role of the Board
3. The Roles and Responsibilities of Board members
4. The Person Specification and Assessment Criteria
5. The Recruitment Process and Timetable
6. How to Apply

Thank you for your interest in the work of the college.



Alex Linkston
Chair of the Board of Governors

1. West Lothian College

West Lothian College, based in Livingston, offers a wide range of further and higher education courses to around 9,000 students each year.

The college's vision is to develop a highly skilled, enterprising and resilient workforce, and our four strategic goals are to:

- Inspire and enable success for all
- Support economic recovery and growth
- Strengthen our communities
- Lead with vision and empathy

Underpinning everything we do are three core values:

- Welcoming to all
- Students at the centre of everything we do
- Always striving for better.

The college provides courses that develop skills and knowledge for employment or further study, and enhance career prospects for those already in work. Employing around 360 staff, West Lothian College is one of the area's largest employers.

Jackie Galbraith was appointed as principal and chief executive in August 2018. She leads the college with a focus on continuous improvement in student success and experience, responsiveness to the needs of the regional economy and local communities, and being a modern, innovative and caring employer.

With a vibrant learning environment, the college strives to ensure that students have the facilities and resources to develop their skills. Over the past two years, the college has invested in new gym equipment for sports students, two high specification cyber security labs, a hybrid vehicle and testing system for automotive courses, and a forest classroom to embed outdoor learning in our early years curriculum.

Significant investment in its digital infrastructure has enabled students and staff at the college to cope well with the global pandemic.

Over the past two years, the college has gained external recognition by receiving a number of awards and accreditations including:

- Innovation in STEM Award (2019)
- Investors in People Silver Award (2019)
- Healthy Working Lives Silver Award (2019)
- Epilepsy Friendly Award (2020)
- LGBT Charter Silver Award (2019)
- College Student Association of the Year Award (2019).

2. The Role of the Board

The Board of Governors is the body ultimately responsible for the affairs of the college.

Board members are responsible for ensuring the quality of the education provided by the college, and also that is delivered in a way that offers value for money. The Board is the governing body of the college and has a legal responsibility to 'manage and conduct' its affairs in such a way that its staff deliver the required services.

The Board's role is a strategic one which means it focuses on:

- Deciding what the organisation needs to achieve
- Monitoring delivery of those goals
- If the goals are not being achieved, understanding why and either ensuring the approach is adjusted or changing the goals

The governance role of the Board is vital and Board members are required to abide by the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. You can access a copy of the Code here: <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Code-of-Good-Governance.pdf>

Board members are part of a national network of bodies responsible for delivering quality education across Scotland. In West Lothian the responsibility for delivery lies with West Lothian College, as a single Regional College.

The membership of the Board of West Lothian College includes two staff members, two student members, and the Principal, as well as 13 non-executive members.

You can find out more about the existing members of the Board at <https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/corporate-and-governance/board-members/>

3. The Roles and Responsibilities of Board members

The overarching duty of Board members is to use your skills, knowledge and time to work as best as you can with your Chair, fellow Board members and staff to ensure that the College fulfils its responsibilities.

Board members make an individual contribution to the collective work of the Board. All members bring their own unique combination of skills and knowledge but all Board members are expected to:

- Contribute to Board discussion in a constructive and supportive manner
- Scrutinise the college's performance and when necessary provide challenge to senior staff and fellow Board members
- Give the required amount of time to the role
- Accept and share corporate collective responsibility
- Devote time to understanding the college and its operational environment
- Take part in an annual board member appraisal process
- Represent the organisation at events as required
- Build relationships of trust and mutual respect with other Board members and senior staff
- Abide by confidentiality requirements subject to Freedom of Information laws
- Uphold and promote the required standards of behaviour and values

All Board members are expected to adhere to the **Nine Principles of Public Life** and act at all times in good faith and in the best interests of learners.

These principles are:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership
- Public Service
- Respect

You can read more about the role of Board members in the Guide for Board Members in the College sector, available here: <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Guidance-Notes-for-Boards-in-the-College-Sector.pdf>

Time Commitment

Different members will have differing levels of involvement. As a minimum, you will be expected to attend four full Board meetings per year and at least three Committee meetings. Full Board meetings are currently held at 4.30pm and the Committees, at least one of which you will be required to be a member, meet on differing days in the morning or late afternoon. The Board is always open to discussing flexible and more innovative ways of working. Each meeting will normally last approximately two and a half hours. In light of COVID19 restrictions meetings are currently held virtually using zoom. A note of meeting dates for 2021 can be found at Appendix 1.

Remuneration

The position of Board member is not remunerated. You will, however, be able to claim reasonable travel and subsistence expenses for your participation in Board activity. Should you have childcare or carer commitments, the College will reimburse you for reasonable expenses associated with alternative care arrangements.

Induction and Training

If appointed, you will be provided with an induction programme to develop your understanding of the College. During your appointment, you will also have the opportunity to participate in additional training and briefings to enhance your skills and knowledge. You will be required to participate in a one-day national induction workshop outside of the College within the first six months of your appointment. With COVID19 restrictions the national induction programme will be delivered on-line.

Term of Appointment

If appointed, you will be appointed for a term of up to four years from the date of appointment. After this period, should you wish, you are able to re-apply for a further term of service. Such reappointment will be subject to your performance on the Board and also consideration of the skills requirements of the Board at that time.

Code of Conduct

All Board members will be asked to sign the College's which can be found here; <https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/media/2698/code-of-conduct-for-west-lothian-college-board-members-2014.pdf>

Restrictions

The Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 makes provision for persons not eligible for appointment as a board member. A note of these provisions is at Appendix 2.

Your appointment is subject to confirmation that you are suitable for appointment by requesting PVG scheme record. It is an offence under section 34 of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act for any person who is barred from regulated work with children to seek to be a board member. Offers of appointment are conditional upon receipt of a written reference from a third party, confirming your suitability for the post.

4. Person Specification and Assessment Criteria

Your application will be considered in relation to the criteria as set out below. These will be assessed through your application and as part of the interview process.

<u>Essential</u>	<u>Desirable</u>
Specific Knowledge and Skills	
Experience of a strategic role in the private sector	
Governance	
Awareness of the need for good governance	Recent experience of a working with a Board
Understanding the 9 principles of public life	
Strategic Contribution	
Ability to challenge constructively within a team environment	Understanding of the needs of West Lothian region
Ability to analyse complex material and reach sound conclusions based on this analysis	Understanding of challenges and opportunities in the College sector
Ability to communicate clearly and effectively	

5. Recruitment Process and Timetable

The closing date for applications is **Friday 4 December 2020 at midnight**.

Your application will be considered by a panel who will review the information you have provided against the person specification and the overall skills matrix for the Board.

Applicants not selected for interview will be notified.

If you are to be interviewed, you will be sent an invitation letter.

You will be advised of the names of the members of the interview panel in your invitation for interview letter.

Interviews will take place virtually using zoom.

The interview will last approximately 1 hour, during which the interview panel will:

- ask you questions based upon the information you have provided in your application to verify this and explore the skills and experience you could bring to the Board; and
- provide you with an opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the College or service with the Board.

Following the interview panel's deliberations and decisions, the Chair of the Board is required to submit nominations for appointment to the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science for final approval. The Minister aims to consider nominations within a month of submission. It is hoped, therefore, to inform interviewees of the outcome by the end of January 2021.

Please note that, should you be successful, the next full meeting of the Board of Governors will take place on 9 March 2021.

6. How to apply

If you would like to apply, please send us your CV and covering letter. Please indicate in the covering letter your availability for an interview on Thursday 17 December 2020.

Your application should be returned:

by email to:

jmclaren@west-lothian.ac.uk

Please note that the closing date for applications is **Friday 4 December 2020 at midnight.**

If you need any help in providing the required information, or would like to find out more about role prior to applying please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer McLaren, at jmclaren@west-lothian.ac.uk

West Lothian College - Board of Governors

Calendar of Meetings 2021

Board of Governors Meeting Schedule 2021

	Learning & Teaching	Finance & General Purposes	Audit	Remuneration Committee/ Board meeting
January				
February	24 February	25 February		
March			04 March	09 March
April				
May				06 May – Strategy Day
June	16 June	17 June	24 June	29 June
July				
August				
September	08 September	09 September	16 September	21 September
October				
November	24 November	25 November		
December			02 December	07 December

A strategic day is also planned for January 2021

Restrictions

As mentioned on page 6, certain people are not eligible for appointment as a board member. Please check the legislation below to ensure that the restrictions do not apply to you.

PARAGRAPH 5A OF SCHEDULE 2 TO THE 1992 ACT (AS INSERTED BY PARAGRAPH 2(7)(C) OF THE SCHEDULE TO THE 2013 ACT)

5A(1)A person is not eligible for appointment as a member of the board if the person—

(a) 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;

(b) is an undischarged bankrupt; or

(c) has been removed from office under section 24 of this Act (in relation to any college) or section 23Q of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 (in relation to any regional board).

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

(a) 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);

(b) who has granted a trust deed for, or made a composition or arrangement with, creditors (and has not been discharged in respect of it);

(c) 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;

(d) who is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking entered into under either of those Acts;

(e) who has been adjudged bankrupt (and has not been discharged); or

(f) 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.