

# Governors help shape Young Professionals

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Governor Recruitment Pack



# Welcome from the Chair of Governors

WQE exists to inspire, prepare and enable the development of Young Professionals, through the provision of excellent post-16 educational opportunities.



Our two extensive, leafy campuses and specialist facilities make WQE an attractive place to study. Split over two sites, we have more outdoor space for sport and leisure than any other local College. Teaching and learning at WQE takes place in purpose-built, specialist accommodation.

We primarily serve Leicester, Leicestershire and the surrounding areas, as a provider of distinctive, accessible and high quality sixth form (16-19) education. We enable Advanced Level success and encourage our students in their early development as professionals. The next step for our students is progression to higher education or good quality employment & training.

We set out to inspire our students, nurture ambition and to prepare them for the future, where they will be ready as responsible and versatile citizens; curious about the world around them with an ongoing commitment to further learning and development in their lives. We embed our core values of community, consideration, challenge, curiosity and commitment.

We offer excellent pastoral and learning support and a wide-ranging enrichment offer to cater for all tastes and interests.

As a leading local provider within the wider education system, we collaborate and respond locally to ensure our Sixth Form College curriculum is coherent, unrivalled in choice, ambitious and relevant. We provide a vital bridge from the school system at age 16 to higher education and future employment and skills opportunities, by providing high quality educational experiences in an excellent learning environment.

As Chair of Governors, it is a privilege to work alongside such a capable, committed and diverse Corporation. Our Governors share a strong commitment to the College's ethos and to ensuring that students remain at the centre of every decision we take, whether that relates to curriculum, estate or the careful stewardship of resources. I am proud to support a College that plays such a pivotal role in developing confident, skilled and ambitious young people.

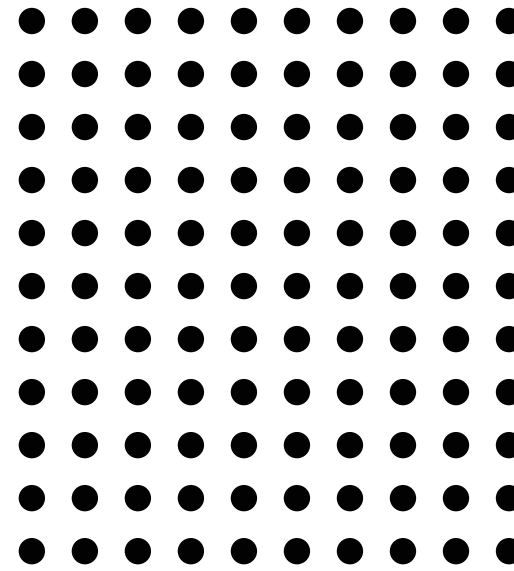
I have worked in higher education for over 20 years and currently serve in a senior role at De Montfort University, where partnership working, strategic development and civic engagement are central to my work. This experience gives me a deep appreciation of the journey our students take beyond sixth form and the importance of preparing them well for higher education, employment and lifelong learning.

The role of Governor carries real responsibility, but it is also immensely rewarding. It provides a meaningful opportunity to contribute to our local community, to bring professional expertise to the table and to learn from the insight and experience of fellow Governors. I continue to be inspired by the dedication of our staff and the potential of our students, and I warmly encourage anyone considering the role to reflect seriously on the difference they could make by joining us as a Governor.

**Sarah Thomson**  
External Governor and Chair of Governors

“Both leaders and governors are ambitious for their students.”

Ofsted, 2024



# A note from the Principal



WQE is a welcoming, open-minded College and we are passionate about our students, as well as ambitious for them and positive about the future. We are dedicated to maximising our students' academic achievements, and most importantly we are committed to preparing them well for a successful future as Young Professionals.

After GCSEs many students are ready for a new challenge, with new opportunities for personal growth. By coming to WQE they are indicating that they want to challenge themselves, learn in a different way, to discover more about who they are and how to get the best out of themselves. This all takes place in an environment where curiosity is encouraged, and commitment is recognised and valued. These are important aspects of the WQE experience and the community we strive to create. It's about feeling part of a bigger world; being a student rather than a pupil. It's about sharing that feeling with lots of other young people with similar aspirations and having the supportive space to develop and grow as a person.

WQE is an academic community with an incredible breadth of choice and through our passionate and dedicated teaching, our students become empowered and confident enough to explore and to discover just what they are capable of, and just how much they can achieve. Consequently, we have a long-established record of success.

We recognise that academic achievement is fundamental to any successful educational experience and eventual progression. Examination results are important criteria that students, parents and carers consider when making decisions about post-16 study and we are proud to help our students achieve consistently well. Students typically undertake full-time and demanding programmes, with exceptionally high proportions completing their programmes and gaining progression into higher levels of study and opening doors to professional careers.

We are particularly pleased that we have been able to maintain the highest standards while at the same time welcoming and helping students to access our provision and gain the benefits of studying in the ambitious environment here at WQE. Students join us from schools across the city, the county and beyond, creating a diverse and vibrant community, which includes many who are supported to overcome circumstances or contexts that without support may have impacted their learning and success.

There is a very strong sense of camaraderie among our students; the College is hugely welcoming and sociable, where people from different cultures, faiths and backgrounds get to learn and socialise together daily – creating a strong sense of togetherness and community.

We greatly cherish our students' drive, energy and enterprise, as well as their consideration for others. We encourage them to be curious, to develop their own ideas, including to challenge us as we challenge them, and to show initiative, character and innovation.

Our mission is to prepare them as Young Professionals for the future, and it is no coincidence that WQE students come across as confident, self-reliant, mature young adults, with a sense of common venture, an attitude to succeed and with high aspirations.

**Paul Wilson**  
Principal



# OUR STRATEGY



# Our strategic direction and work with stakeholders

“ As a Governor, I have the opportunity, as part of a team, to influence strategic decisions, promote inclusivity and innovation, and ensure that the College meets local workforce needs. The role of a Governor directly impacts the decisions and direction of the College which ultimately impacts the lives of the students at WQE.”

Jimmy Zachariah, External Governor.

To build on our recent successes, and continue developing, it will remain important to us that our key stakeholders are part of our planning and success, with the intention that they invested in WQE being distinctive and known for the following:

**Our ambition and commitment** to delivering excellence in all that we do, including our positive approach to challenging and supporting individuals to be the best they can be, within and beyond our college community.

**Our curriculum**, with unrivalled breadth and choice, that continues to enable access to, and success at, advanced level as a foundation for successful futures.

**Our outstanding** learning environment, specialisms, and sense of community, enabling pursuit of excellence and participation in a rounded education.

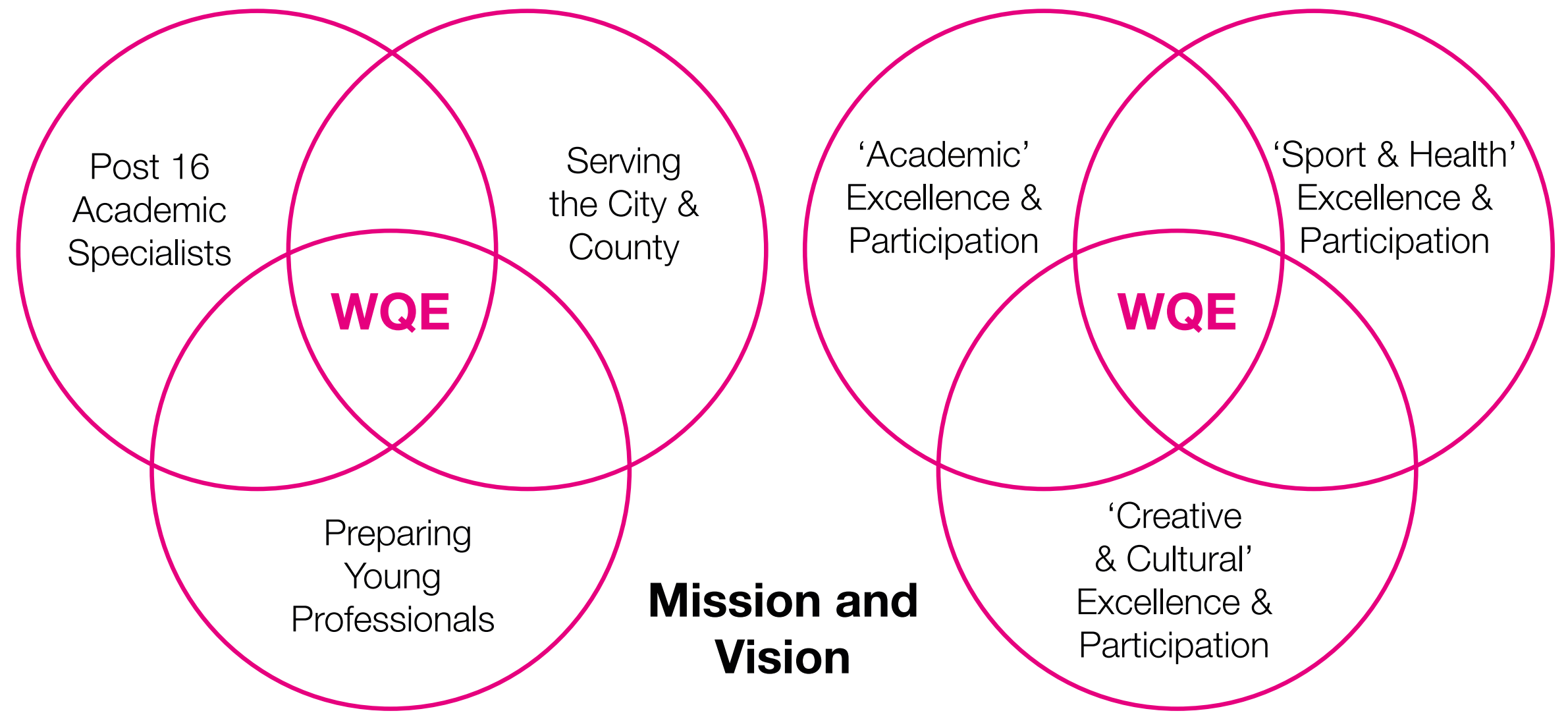
**Our total commitment** to continuous improvement, ensuring a high quality, personalised approach – one that changes lives for the better, supports progression and the early development of Young Professionals.

**Our leadership** in sharing and contributing in ways that make a difference, and add value within our own community and beyond.

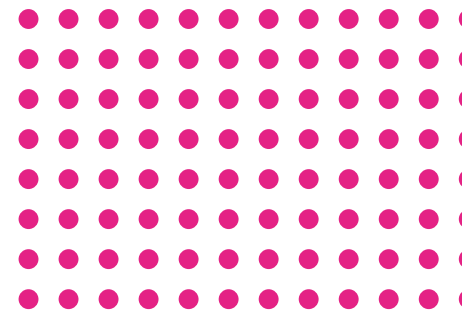
**Our students** in having both the appetite and the tools to keep learning and to make a difference in their own lives, as well as to the lives of others, including through their actions and preparation to make future contributions in society.

**Our skilled and talented staff** who are valued, supported to develop themselves, and are appreciated as professionals, enabling them to recognise shared goals, work together to add value, and who operate as professionals who continue to learn and develop.

**Our appetite** to consider and respond to the future, to innovate and to both utilise and lead in the application of technology for advancing education and learning.

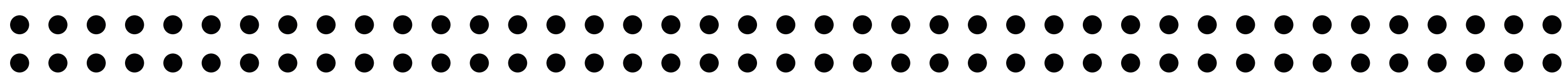


Explore the College Prospectus:  
[wqe.ac.uk/our-prospectus/](http://wqe.ac.uk/our-prospectus/)





# OUR GOVERNORS



# Introduction to the role of Governor

“Governors are highly committed to the student experience and have championed a focus on disadvantaged and SEND learners, ensuring that the needs of such learners are taken into account in college planning and performance review. Governors put students at the heart of decision making.”  
External Review of Governance, 2024.

WQE’s governing board, known as the Corporation, comprises 19 Governors in total. Governors have a range of perspectives, some are our own stakeholders, such as the two Student Governors, two Staff Governors, a Parent Governor and the Principal, and some are from the wider community.



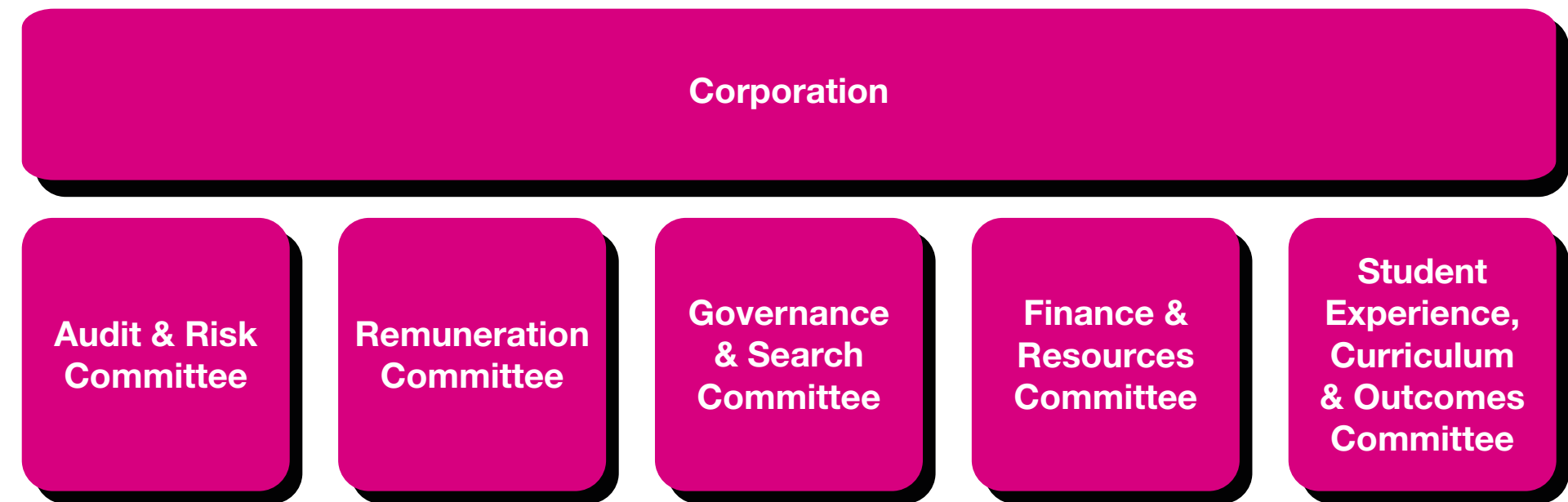
From the wider community of professionals who live or work in Leicester and Leicestershire, we recruit 13 Governors from a range of professional backgrounds, known as External Governors.

External Governors work in, or have retired from, the public, private and third sectors and bring an external perspective to the Corporation. Our External and Parent Governors are able to draw on their middle or senior management or leadership experience from their own careers to strengthen the Corporation as a positive, forward-looking and aspirational collective, able to make informed strategic decisions which impact on the future direction of the College.

Our governance is dynamic and inclusive. We continuously reflect on our performance and are supported by a Director of Governance, as well as six members of the Executive Leadership Team. We have a model of governance which plays to the strengths of our Governors, by enabling them to add value to focused topic-based agendas through discussion and constructive questioning, where they can draw on their specialist knowledge, skill and experience, by serving on at least one Committee.

Each Committee reports into the Corporation at four meetings a year, where Governors collectively make strategic decisions. There are a number of ways in which Governors can see the impact of their strategic decision making on the College curriculum offer, its two-campus estate and the student and staff experience.

## Our Corporation and Committee structure



Governors are proud to serve the College and its stakeholders, and a number of Governors are either alumni or their relatives have attended the College. We welcome expressions of interest from our alumni as well as professionals looking for an interesting and rewarding volunteering opportunity, who are passionate about wanting to shape Young Professionals of the future.

# Governor - Role profile

## The Corporation's core functions are:

- determining the College's educational character.
- setting and communicating the College's strategy and goals.
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance and quality of the College, and for the performance of staff.
- exercising effective control to ensure that funds and assets are protected, the College remains solvent and legal obligations are met.

## Governors have six main duties under charity law:

- to ensure the Corporation carries out its purpose for the public benefit.
- to comply with the Corporation's governing document and the law.
- to act in the Corporation's best interests.
- to manage the Corporation's resources responsibly.
- to act with reasonable care and skill.
- to ensure the Corporation is accountable.

## Core Governor responsibilities:

- To undertake induction training on appointment to the role and to take an active part in any ongoing training and personal development.
- To comply with the provisions of the following documents as they apply to the role of members of the Corporation:
  - Instrument and Articles of Government.
  - Standing Orders
  - Code of Conduct
  - Funding Agreement
  - The Nolan Committee's seven principles of public life.
- To act in the best interests of the Corporation and the College.
- To act as an ambassador for the College in the wider community.
- To read all papers sent prior to a meeting to ensure a full and informed debate and decision-making process.
- To give due priority to attending meetings of the Corporation and its Committees, and to play an active and constructive role in governance meetings.
- To support decisions of the Corporation once they have been reached on the basis of collective responsibility, even if an individual Governor may have spoken against a proposal during a debate at a meeting.
- To promote the College's equality, and diversity policies.
- To attend College events in order to gain an appreciation of the work of the College and to meet its students and staff.
- To appreciate that individual members have no specific powers, e.g. statements may only be made on behalf of the Corporation by those authorised to do so.
- To respond in a timely manner to requests by email or phone which are sometimes time-sensitive, about specific governance-related matters.

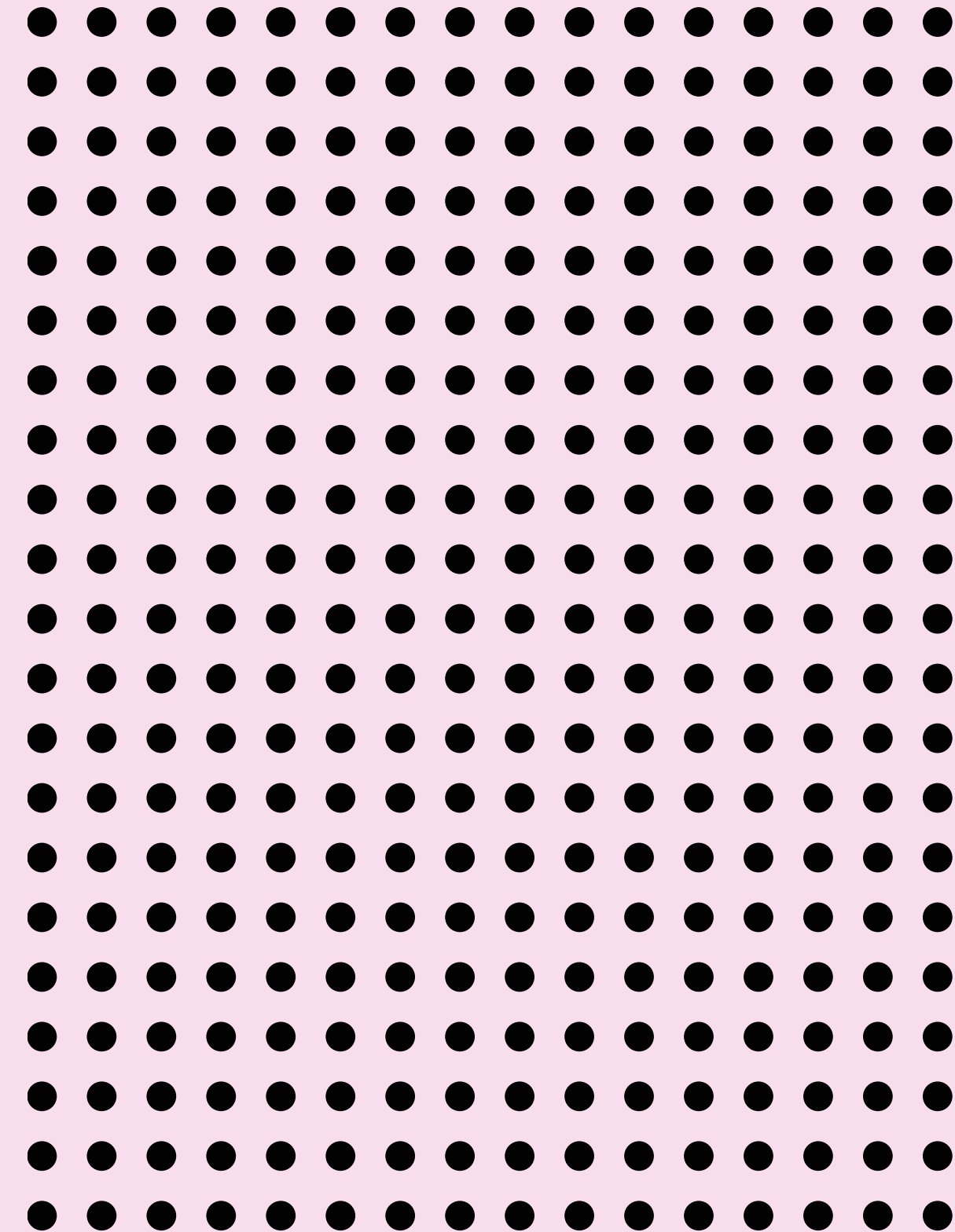
## Minimum Governor commitment:

- Governors serve a tenure of 4 years.
- Governors spend 3-4 hours a month undertaking their role.
- Governors attend 4 Corporation meetings a year, as well as a kickstart meeting at the beginning of an academic year, and a Governor Conference mid-way through the year.
- Governors are members of at least one Committee. Committees generally meet 3 times a year.
- Attendance at Corporation meetings is in the evening and is face-to-face.
- Attendance at Committee meetings is in the evening and may be remote or face-to-face.

## Additional opportunities for Governor engagement:

- Governors can undertake two annual visits to College during the College day- to a curriculum team and a support team where they are able to see first-hand how their strategic decision making impacts on the student and staff experience and the College environment.
- Governors are invited to celebratory events where students showcase their successes.

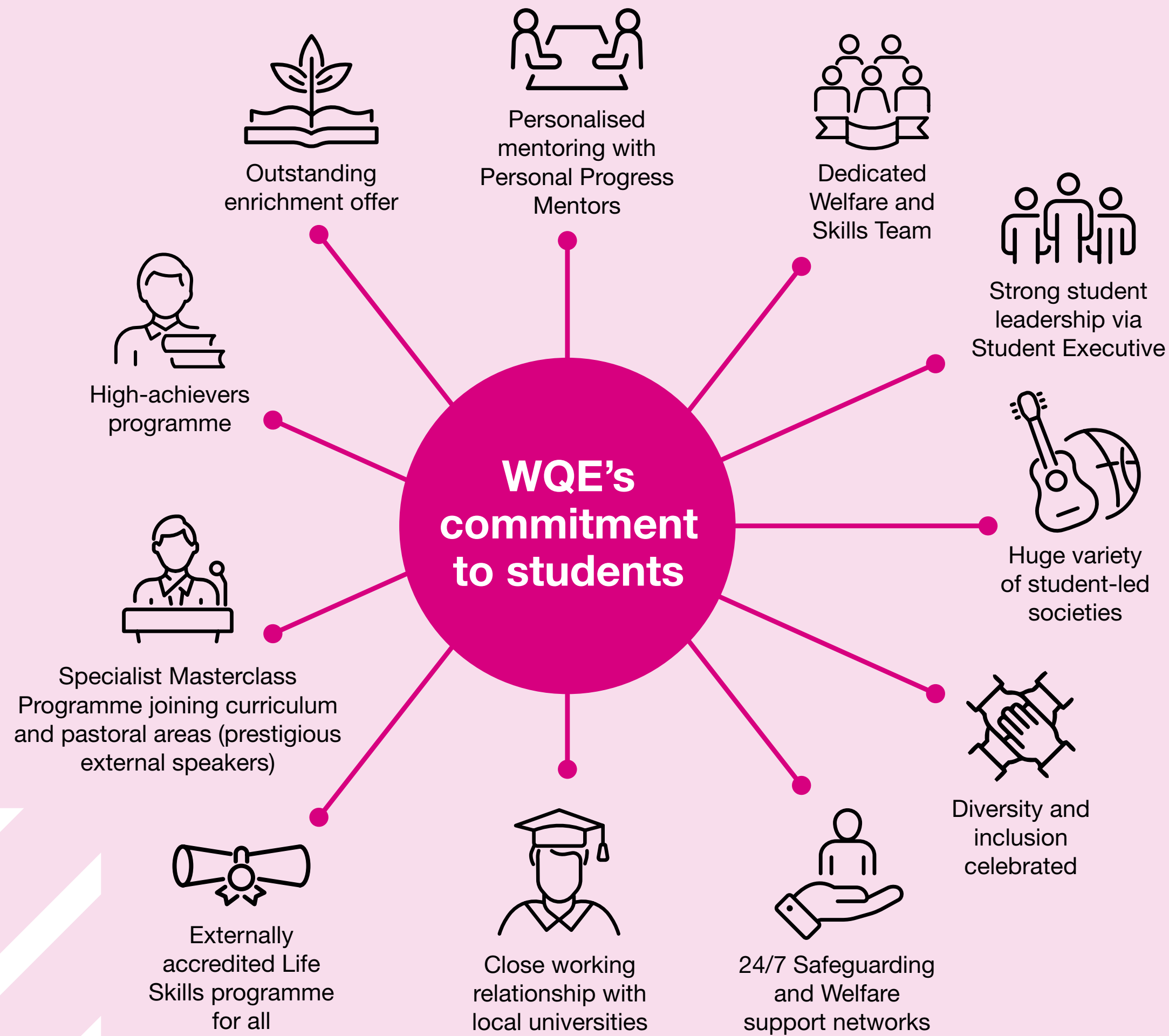
To register your interest as a Governor, please contact our Director of Governance, Rachel Middleton, at [rachel.middleton@wqe.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.middleton@wqe.ac.uk)





# GOVERNOR REFLECTIONS

# Governor reflections on the importance of a positive student experience at WQE



“ WQE is an inclusive and open-minded College - all the staff are passionate about the students, not just their academic achievements but also the other positive changes that set them on their way to being competent Young Professionals. Governors talk about being a College with no glass ceilings, where students have chosen to come to WQE and want to achieve and be the best that they can be - that's what makes me proud to be a Governor here. ”

**Joyce Black, External Governor**



“ I became a WQE Governor because of the positive experience I had whilst studying at the College myself. This was largely attributed to the efforts of staff and Governors creating a positive, inclusive and fulfilling 'student life'. The team at WQE supported me and others, pushing us forward and providing opportunities to be better geared up for life after College. ”

**Hasan Peerbhai, External Governor**



“ I chose to apply to become an External Governor because of the ethos of the College - the commitment to champion all students, particularly those who have experienced challenging circumstances, to thrive by becoming productive members of society. ”

**Jimmy Zachariah, External Governor**



“ I was drawn to becoming a Governor at WQE because of its commitment to supporting every student. It is a very values driven organisation and that really appeals to me. The College achieves great results and takes the approach of no student being left behind, the commitment to student welfare and wellbeing is exemplary and it is a pleasure to be a part of it. It is also a College that is focused on the future and how we are preparing young people for their careers, I was really impressed by the focus of developing Young Professionals and this was an area where I felt I could add real value because of my own experience. ”

**Sarah Thomson, External Governor and Chair of Governors**





# GOVERNOR TESTIMONIALS

# Testimonials



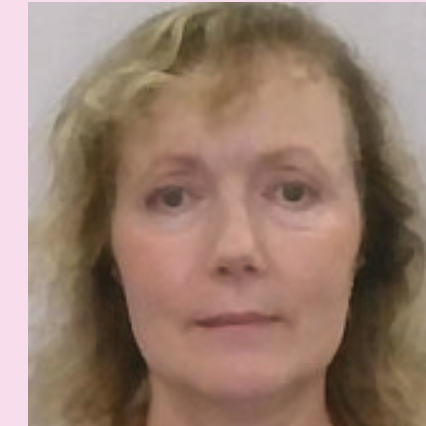
“With a background in education, I spent a number of years as a primary school Governor, and working within a national educational provider. Stepping into a Governor role with WQE has been both challenging, exciting and enriching. I’m relatively new to the setting, however I have learned a great deal already. I’m working alongside a diverse and supportive board. This has been extremely rewarding, and the role is strengthening my understanding of governance, the post-16 education sector, while allowing me to contribute meaningfully to the College’s continued success.”

**Onkar Korotana, External Governor**



“My decision to enrol my daughter at WQE was informed by the College’s established reputation for academic excellence, strong and accountable leadership, and its clear commitment to inclusion, equity, and positive student outcomes. I was particularly impressed by the high standards consistently upheld across teaching, pastoral care, and governance. With a longstanding interest in supporting young people and promoting inclusive environments where all students can succeed, becoming a Parent Governor felt both purposeful and well aligned with my values and professional experience. Serving on the governing board enables me to contribute to an institution that takes its responsibility for educational quality, equity, and long-term student success with the seriousness it deserves.”

**Adeola Obadan, Parent Governor**



“Becoming a Staff Governor at WQE has given me the opportunity to contribute towards the strategic direction of the College and to learn more about the role Sixth Form Colleges like ours play in the national education landscape. My role as Governor allows me to use my professional expertise to have both oversight and understanding of the College’s performance and the quality of the service it offers its students and local communities. I’ve received a high standard of support along the way including an in-depth induction process and ongoing training opportunities to help me develop the skills required to meet my responsibilities as a Governor. It’s a hugely fulfilling role; I’ve found it especially rewarding to work with such a committed team of knowledgeable professionals who share a passion for the future of WQE and its students.”

**Alison Stone, Staff Governor**



“I still remember the first day I visited the WQE campus and I loved the vibrancy and spirit of the staff and students. It is a pleasure to serve as a Governor and the Vice-Chair of the Corporation for WQE, it is great to think that the skills I have through my professional career can be used to help and support the College with its strategic goals.”

**Sarah Thomson, External Governor and Chair of Governors**



“ I became a Governor at WQE because strong post-16 education changes life chances. The role is about clear thinking, proper challenge and making sure the College remains ambitious, financially sustainable and focused on student outcomes.

We hold leaders to account, but we also support them to deliver. What I value most is that students genuinely sit at the centre of decision-making from curriculum to safeguarding to long-term strategy.”

**Iain McKenzie, External Governor and Vice Chair of Governors**



“ Becoming a Governor at WQE is a rewarding role that allows me to make a meaningful impact on education and my local community. I am a teacher with over twenty years of experience, all within the 11-19 landscape. I have been a subject lead, Head of Department, Pastoral Lead and am currently Director of Learning for Post- 16 studies at a Leicestershire College. My experience of strategic leadership, across many areas such as student experience, marketing, recruitment and outcomes are areas of strength and enable me to make a valuable contribution to the life of WQE.

I believe Governors play a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction of a College, ensuring high standards of teaching and learning for all students. The role is a fantastic way to support the community, contributing to the success and development of WQE and benefiting its students, families, and staff.”

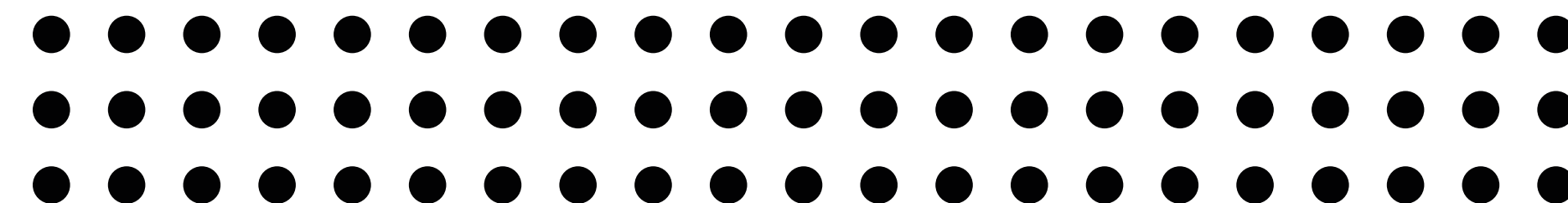
**Phill Ashton, External Governor**



“ I’ve spent all of my working life in further education, both as a teacher and senior manager and at a national policy and research level so for me being an External Governor was an obvious extension of that. So when Regent College approached me back in 2009 to join the Board as a Governor I felt extremely privileged to be asked. I’m really interested in young people and passionate about the learning experiences they have. I wanted to be in a position to make a real difference to some of the Board decisions that influence their experiences in a College and the role of Governor fitted that bill. I would encourage others because you can see and hear first-hand the differences some of those collective Governor decisions make on a young person’s life chances and the opportunities they have to study - it is very rewarding and motivating.

WQE is an inclusive and open-minded College - you can see that all the staff are passionate about the students, not just their academic achievements but also the other positive changes that set them on their way to being competent Young Professionals. Governors talk about being a College with no glass ceilings, where students have chosen to come to WQE and want to achieve and be the best that they can be, that’s what makes me proud to be a Governor here.”

**Joyce Black, External Governor**



# NEXT STEPS TOWARDS BECOMING A GOVERNOR



# Next Steps

We would like our Corporation to be as diverse as the community we serve, so we actively welcome all expressions of interest in becoming one of our Governors.

## Let's discuss the Governor role some more

As a first step we ask you to have an informal chat with our Director of Governance, Rachel Middleton, which you can hold over the phone, via video call or in person.

You can contact Rachel at [rachel.middleton@wqe.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.middleton@wqe.ac.uk) to find a mutually convenient time for a chat, during the day or evening.

Rachel will introduce you to our governance model and the role of a Governor at WQE. You can ask any questions you might have about the Governor role and Rachel can also put you in touch with one of our existing Governors to give you a first-hand overview of how they see their role and what they enjoy.

If you would like to join us for a tour of our campuses and a chat to our Staff and Student Governors, then you are very welcome.

## Ready to apply to become a Governor? - Next steps

Our Director of Governance will ask you to complete a Governor application form outlining your interest in the role and your experience and skills. We also ask for a CV.

We will ask you for the names and contact details of two referees who know you in a professional capacity.

Your application will be considered by Governors from our Governance & Search Committee.

And if we have a vacancy we will invite you to come and meet a panel of Governors so they can find out more about you, and equally you can find out more about us.

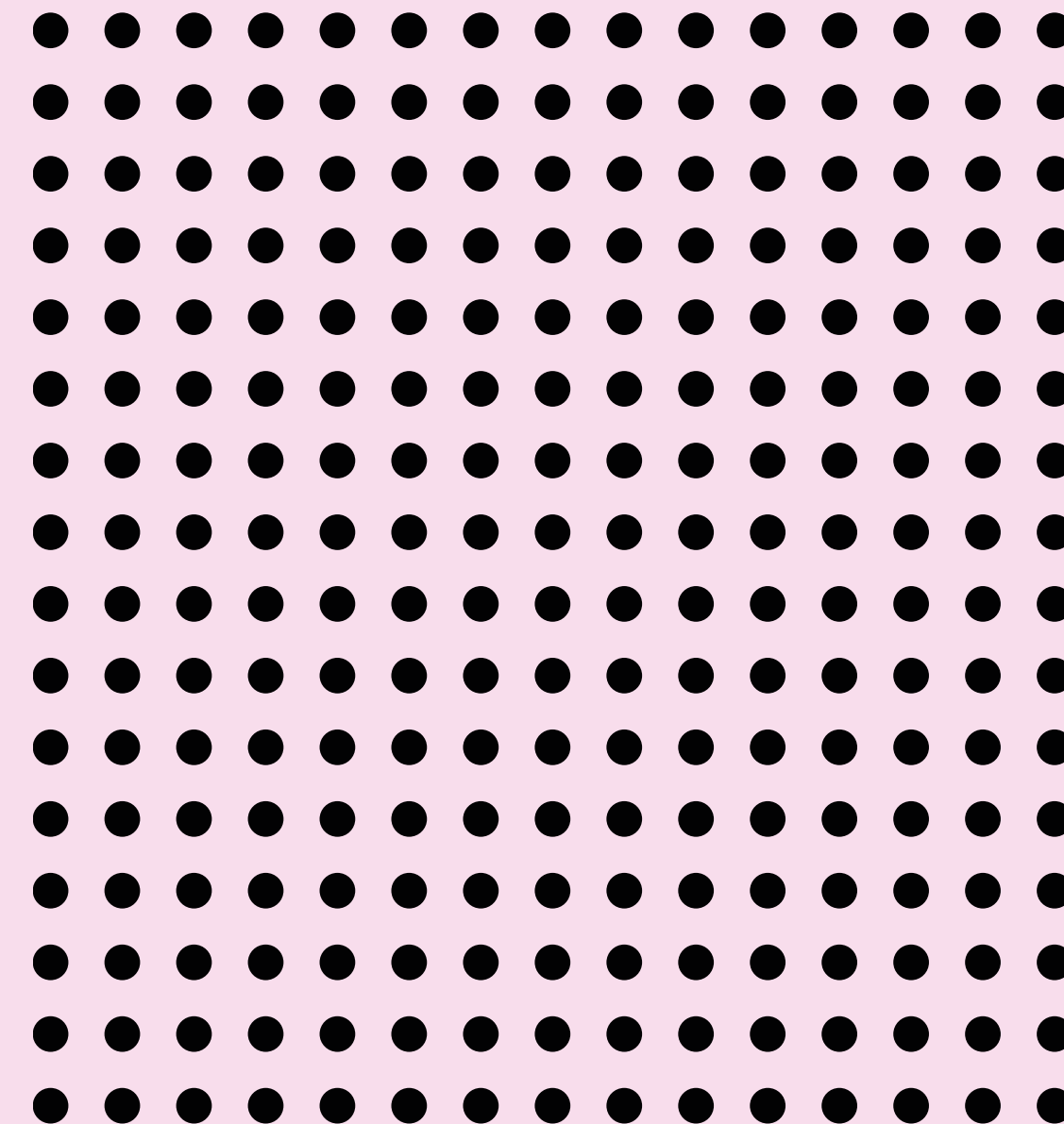
## Not ready to proceed right now, but possibly in the future.....

Let's keep in touch.

If the time is not right for you to commit to being a Governor right now, but you would like to consider it in the future, just let us know and we will write to you now and again to see if the time is right.

We will hold your details on our Register of Interested Governors.

Please contact our Director of Governance, Rachel Middleton at [rachel.middleton@wqe.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.middleton@wqe.ac.uk)



Add your voice, and support to help shape Young Professionals by becoming one of our committed and dynamic Governors.



Find out more about our current Governors:  
[wqe.ac.uk/governors\\_co-opted/](http://wqe.ac.uk/governors_co-opted/)

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“ If you want to use your experience in a way that has real impact in Leicester and Leicestershire, this is a board where you can make a difference. ”  
Iain McKenzie, External Governor and Vice Chair of Governors

“ I wanted to become a Governor at WQE because I am passionate about the difference that education can make to a young person's life. I believe that I can make a small impact as a Governor in what is a great College and it is genuinely a privilege to be a part of it. If you're considering becoming a Governor, do get in touch to find out more, as you may be surprised by the skills that you have and the positive impact that they can make. ”  
Sarah Thomson, External Governor and Chair of Governors