

JOB DESCRIPTION

Governance Manager

Department:	Chief Executive's Department
Reports to:	Chief Executive
Direct reports:	Executive Assistant (Chief Executive)
Key Internal Relationships:	Chief Executive Chair, Board of Trustees College President and other Officers Council Board of Trustees Lay Advisory Panel (LAP) Departmental Directors Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Committee Secretariats HR team Head of Data Systems
Key External Relationships:	Optical bodies General Optical Council UK Universities Key Employers (Multiples) Other stakeholders Suppliers of accommodation, travel and other services
Key areas of influence:	This role manages our governance, and has budget responsibility for governance costs. It will set standards of delivery and ensure joined up thinking and working College wide.

Purpose of the Role

This management role provides leadership for the College's governance frameworks and practices, and stakeholder engagement by:

- Ensuring the College's governance arrangements support effective decision making, accountability and regulatory compliance.
- Providing strategic governance support to enable the Chief Executive to lead the College with maximum impact, effectiveness and efficiency.
- Ensuring the effective governance and efficient operation of the College's Council, Board and Committees, in line with its Royal Charter, charity law, regulatory requirements and good governance principles.
- Establishing and maintaining effective business systems and procedures within the Chief Executive's Department including supporting the development, monitoring and reporting of the College's business plan and strategic plan.
- Building and maintaining effective relationships with those within the College's governance structure to support delivery of its strategic objectives.

The role is varied and changes across the year, in line with the College business cycles.

Main Responsibilities

Governance Leadership

1. Ensure the College's governance arrangements operate effectively and in accordance with its Royal Charter, regulatory requirements and recognised good governance principles.
2. Develop, maintain and report on the Governance workstream key performance indicators (KPIs) delivering the annual work plan in collaboration with the Chief Executive, monitoring progress against agreed objectives, coordinating monthly performance reporting, presenting progress, risks and achievements to the Senior Leadership Team.
3. Develop, maintain and report on the College's KPI framework, including the administration of the automated monthly reporting process for the Senior Leadership Team and the preparation of quarterly performance reports for the Board of Trustees.
4. Develop and maintain the College's strategic plan reporting framework, including the preparation of twice-yearly reports for the Senior Management Team and the Board of Trustees.
5. Monitor developments in governance, charity law and best practice, recommending and implementing changes to governance frameworks, policies and procedures where appropriate.
6. Manage the governance framework for the Board of Trustees, Council and Committees, including the annual cycle of meetings and governance activities.
7. Oversee the preparation and distribution of agendas and papers for Board and Council undertaken by the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive, ensuring that governance standards and deadlines for distribution are met.
8. Lead the Governance Group, coordinating governance improvement across the College through the preparation of agendas, papers, action plan and governance recommendations.
9. Oversee the preparation and distribution of papers for the Board, Council and Committees as required by the Chief Executive.
10. Oversee the governance processes of election and appointment of Council members, Officers, Trustees, Committee Chairs and the early Career Representative on Council, regularly reviewing processes and procedures to be fair, transparent and inclusive.
11. Manage the governance arrangements for the Annual General Meeting including the preparation of all statutory and governance documentation.
12. Oversee the process for the nomination of Life and Honorary Fellows of the College with administrative support provided by the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive.
13. Lead the regular governance information processes for Council members, Trustees and senior staff by monitoring and maintaining records of Declarations of Interest, senior officer suitability, areas of expertise and EDI. Ensuring that the information is regularly updated to support effective governance succession planning, and actions to mitigate conflicts are implemented effectively to comply with the College's governance obligations as an Ofqual recognised awarding organisation.
14. Draft review and maintain standing orders, terms of reference and other governance documents.

15. Lead the recruitment and appointment process for members of the Lay Advisory Panel (LAP).
16. Manage the governance budgets and approve expense claims submitted by Council members, Trustees, LAP members, the International Representative and other relevant representatives, ensuring compliance with the College's policies.
17. Oversee events as required for Officers, Board of Trustees, Council, LAP and the Senior Management Team e.g. away days, dinners and local network events.
18. Support and develop Council members in their role as regional representatives and advocates for the College, including leading the roll out of the Council Online Forums programme to strengthen engagement with members and gather regional insight.
19. Support the Chief Executive in governance-related projects, including constitutional developments, governance reviews and initiatives to strengthen the College's governance framework.

Stakeholder Management

20. Lead the co-ordination of the College's stakeholder engagement, ensuring a consistent, responsive and professional experience across the College.
21. Develop and manage the ongoing delivery of an effective cross-College stakeholder management process.
22. Support any sector-wide stakeholder meetings being convened by the Chief Executive.
23. Work in collaboration with all departments to shape and improve relationships with customers and stakeholders, supporting them to be College ambassadors.

Support for the Chief Executive's Office

24. Oversee the coordination of business systems and procedures for the Chief Executive's Department and ensure the smooth running of the Department.
25. Manage the annual budget for the College's governance activities.
26. Manage any ad-hoc projects for the Chief Executive.
27. Line manage and develop the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive.
28. Build and maintain effective relationships with internal colleagues and key stakeholders.
29. Foster and promote an environment that emulates the values of the College.
30. Carry out from time to time and as directed, any other duties as required by the Chief Executive in addition to the above that will be both reasonable and within your capabilities.
31. Ensure that at all times you take care of your health and safety and that of others by complying with health and safety obligations, particularly by reporting promptly any defects, risks or potential hazards.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience

Essential: Experience in a similar role
Experience of supporting senior level management
Experience of managing election processes and procedures within a membership organisation
Experience of managing organisation-wide projects
Experience of developing KPIs and operating procedures
Experience of stakeholder management

Desirable: Experience of working in a professional body and/or membership organisation

Education / Qualifications

Essential: GCSEs, or equivalent qualifications, in English and Mathematics

Desirable: A degree-level qualification, or evidence of graduate-level capabilities
Relevant professional qualifications

Skills and Knowledge

Essential: Relevant charity governance legislation
Business acumen with budget and project management skills
Excellent written and oral communication skills
Experience of report writing
Able to process numerical data
MS Office; Word, Outlook, Excel and Powerpoint
Minute taking
MS Teams and Zoom video conferencing.

Desirable: Experience of using databases

Personal Attributes

- Excellent interpersonal, communication and stakeholder management skills
- Pro-active with a continuous improvement mindset
- Strong influencing & relationship building skills
- Strategic and analytical thinker with sound judgement
- Collaborative, with the ability to build effective working relationships across all levels of the College and the wider sector
- Maintains the highest levels of confidentiality and integrity
- Resilient and calm under pressure
- Highly organised with a strong attention to detail
- Able to work independently, meeting deadlines, exercising initiative and professional judgement
- Reliable
- Able to manage multiple priorities and deliver to competing deadlines.
- Coaching
- Committed to delivering high standards of governance and customer service

Additional Information

- The College's normal working hours are 35 per week. This role is flexible and can be worked over a variety of working patterns.

- The post holder may on occasion be required to work late. There will be occasional overnight stays for some meetings and events in London and across the UK.
- **Confidentiality and Discretion** - In this role, the post holder will be dealing with projects and correspondence that are of a highly confidential nature. No details of any College business must be discussed either at work or privately.
- **Diplomacy / Propriety / Etiquette** - All callers, colleagues and visitors must be treated with respect and courtesy.
- **Adaptable and Flexible** - The requirements of this role include a need for a flexible approach to duties carried out and hours worked.
- **Professional Image** - This must be presented at all times and applies to; appearance, dress, quality of work, developing standards of presentation for documents and reports and maintaining a clean and tidy work environment.
- **Team Work** - Able to work with and contribute to the whole team by ensuring that help is offered to others when another staff member is over-burdened. This will require a hands on, practical and resourceful approach.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

The College is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination. We value the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation.

Our values



Last updated: July 2026