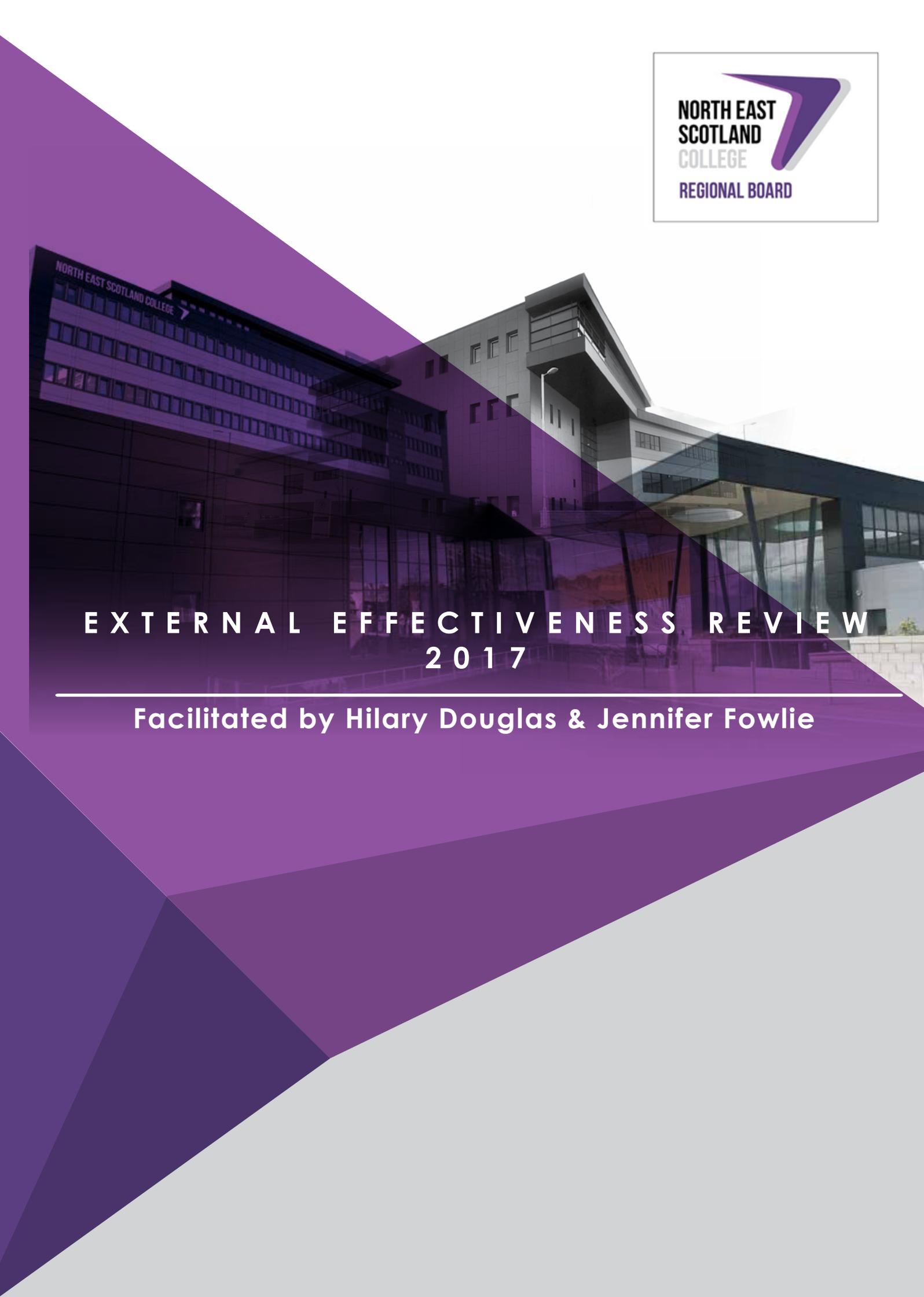




**NORTH EAST  
SCOTLAND  
COLLEGE**  
REGIONAL BOARD



**EXTERNAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW  
2017**

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**Facilitated by Hilary Douglas & Jennifer Fowlie**

## BACKGROUND

The [Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges](#) states:

*“The board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness at least every three years. The board must send its self-evaluation (including an externally facilitated evaluation) and board development plan (including progress on previous year’s plan) to its funding body and publish them online”.*

Guidance issued by Colleges Scotland advised that the Review is a mechanism to provide assurance to college funding bodies that the level of governance in each organisation is appropriate. The Review is also to highlight issues important to the development of the Board, resulting in an agreed list of actions on areas that Board Members wish to develop their governance further.

The Review is to be based around the five Principles of the Code of Good Governance of Scotland's Colleges:

- Leadership and Strategy
- Quality of the Student Experience
- Accountability
- Effectiveness
- Relationships and Collaboration.

## METHODOLOGY

The following activities were undertaken to capture evidence to inform the External Effectiveness Review of North East Scotland College (NESCol):

- An online questionnaire issued to all Board Members - see Appendix 1.
- An online questionnaire issued to all members of the College’s Senior Management Team (SMT) - see Appendix 2.
- A desktop review of key governance documentation and information to demonstrate compliance with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges was undertaken – see Appendix 3.
- A Board Meeting was observed.
- Interviews were conducted with:
  - The Principal
  - A Board Member
  - A member of the Senior Management Team.
- Discussions with the Secretary to the Board regarding the operation of the Board and its Committees and the conduct of business.

## KEY FINDINGS

The following summarises the key findings under each of the Principles of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.

### LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

The Review evidences the Board's awareness of its critical role in terms of Leadership and Strategy.

In December 2016, the Board appointed a new Principal and Chief Executive. This is clearly a significant change for both the College and the Board. At a Board Meeting in January 2017 the new Principal gave a presentation 'Towards Excellence' focusing on how to "make a good college great" and the core principles for taking the College 'beyond merger'.

Performance Management Objectives set by the Regional Chair for the Principal have been shared with the Board and progress against these will be reported regularly. This will ensure that the Board is informed of the direction of travel and is aware of the importance of the relationship between the Regional Chair and Principal in terms of governance.

The inclusion of Planning Events as part of the Board's annual Programme of Meetings is key to enabling the Board to determine the vision, direction, educational character, values and ethos of the College. In recognising the importance of these Events the Board, in recent years, has elected to hold a mid-year Event in addition to its Annual Event.

The Board clearly owns and plays a crucial role in the development of the College's Strategic Plan. The Board is also responsible for approving a number of the College's key supporting Strategies and is involved in the development of the College's Outcome Agreement. Both the Strategic Plan and Outcome Agreement are key agenda items at Board Planning Events. The social and economic needs of the region are also key to discussions held at these Events and are reflected upon when setting the overall strategic direction of the College.

The College's current Strategic Plan covers the planning period 2015-2018 and as such the Board will start to consider the development of its next Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2021 at its mid-year Planning Event scheduled for May 2017. The Board will also consider a new Strategic Planning Cycle for adoption at this Event. A comment made by one Board Member highlighted a revitalised enthusiasm for the Planning Events providing opportunities for the Board to be "*forward looking and ambitious for NESCol.*"

The Board and its Committees regularly monitor Performance Indicators, including key measures relating to HR, Health & Safety and Quality. The Board also monitors progress against the Outcome Agreement and other key commitments e.g. Equality Outcomes.

The Board is evidently aware of its role in providing leadership in relation to equality and diversity. To demonstrate this the Board appointed its first Equality and Diversity Champion in October 2016. The key objectives of the role are to:

- To help ensure that the Board observes good practice in regard to equality and diversity;
- To further embed equality and diversity in the Board's strategic and decision-making processes;
- To help ensure that the Board complies with its legal obligations in regard to equality and diversity and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The introduction of this role has been commended by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU).

A recently identified priority in terms of the College's strategy is its approach to commerciality, with the Board recording its support for the creation of a Business Development Strategy. This is in recognition of the need to consider other sources of funding in order to be less dependent on SFC funding and to strengthen the financial sustainability of the College. Board Member views note that this development is also expected to improve responsiveness to stakeholders. In support of the new Strategy's implementation the Board acknowledges that consideration needs to be given to possible additional resources for employer engagement activities.

### **QUALITY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

The Review has highlighted the Board's commitment for ensuring that there is a strong learner voice.

In July 2016 the Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee directed that a review of the Students' Association (SA) be undertaken. The aim of the Review was *"To ensure that the SA is sustainable going forward and has the appropriate structures and resources in place to create an association that adds value, is valued by the College's students and staff and enables positive student engagement year on year."* The Review was undertaken jointly by key College Managers and the Students' Association, with two Board Members also fully involved in the process. Following the Review, agreement was reached to remove the Association from the charity register and for it to become a College department, with this change being implemented for academic year 2017-18. Feedback received from Board Members indicates that this direction of travel is welcomed and viewed as a move towards a more meaningful partnership between the Board and the Association.

Recent discussions at both Board and Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee meetings record Board support for the development of a new Students' Association Strategic Plan, and the introduction of a partnership agreement between the Association and the College. Members have been vocal in their support for the Association and work being undertaken to build on its impact and contribution to the College and on the learner experience.

Board Member attendance at the annual student Graduations in both Aberdeen and Fraserburgh is high. Board Members also attend various student events, showcases and awards throughout each academic year. Board Member feedback did however mention that further opportunities for face-to-face interactions with staff and students would be welcomed with the benefit of anecdotal evidence and informal discussions with both staff and students noted.

The two Student Board Members are provided with an opportunity to submit and present a report to each meeting of the Learning & Teaching and Student Services Committee. The Student Board Members are also allocated a presentation slot at each of the Board's Planning Events.

In addition to the above examples, the following Board Member comments relating to the relationship between the Board and the Association were noted:

*"We are committed to working with the Students' Association as equal partners in ensuring that the quality of the student experience is as high as it can be."*

*"It is essential that we support the new Students' Association to refocus its efforts to strengthen the student voice in decision making."*

Views shared by a Member of the Senior Management Team support the level of commitment shown by the Board:

*"It is clear that the Board is keen to place students at the centre of its deliberations and College's activities. Changes that are being put in place and which have been led by the Board will mean stronger and more meaningful engagement with the Association."*

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Review has confirmed that the Board has robust governance practice and processes in place.

The Board has operates in line with a detailed Governance Manual which contains its Scheme of Delegations, Terms of Reference for the Board and each of its Committees, Code of Conduct, and details key arrangements and practices for meeting, minutes etc. A Register of Interests is maintained and updated at least twice during each calendar year.

Agendas are set for each meeting the Board and Committees, with the agenda and associated papers nearly always issued 5 working days before the relevant meeting. Papers 'to follow' or tabled papers are only used where unavoidable to ensure that Members have adequate time to review and consider information provided in advance of meetings. In relation to the standard of meeting papers issued, a Board Member commented *"Without doubt the level of information received is not only of good quality but is sufficient to make proper decisions."*

An opportunity to declare potential conflicts of interest is a standing agenda item for all Board and Committee meetings.

The Board operates in an open and transparent manner publishing Board and Committee agendas, papers and approved minutes on the College website. Other governance related documents, including the Governance Manual and Register of Interests, are also made available online.

The Terms of Reference for each Committee include details of the member(s) of the Senior Management Team who provide objective, specialist advice to support the Committee to discharge its remit. Feedback noted *"The Board clearly holds SMT members to account. Accordingly, SMT members tend to be clear about their responsibilities."*

The minutes of meetings of the Board and each Committees go to the next meeting for approval.

Annual returns to the SFC, the Outcome Agreement, and Financial Statements are all submitted by required deadlines with Board and/or Committee related discussions and approvals scheduled appropriately as part of annual Programmes of Business.

It was noted from discussions with all of those interviewed, a number of proposals relating to possible changes are to be considered at the Board's mid-year Planning Event scheduled for May 2017. The proposals aim to:

- Increase the meaningfulness and effectiveness of Board and Committee meetings;
- Increase opportunities for discussion and challenge;
- Improve focus on strategic rather than operational matters;
- Improve reporting aligned to key College cycles;
- Improve the monitoring of outcomes;
- Reduce repetition through the review of frequency of business and types of papers considered by Committees.

This will include reviewing the Programme of Meetings, Terms of Reference and Programmes of Business for the Board and each of its Committees, refreshing the format of agendas and papers, and utilising the College's new intranet to further improve the accessibility of Board information and also the availability of College information to all Board Members.

The Board has recently acknowledged the need to review of its approach to risk management, including the adoption of a risk appetite statement. In due course, the Board plans to develop a new Strategic Risk Register in line with its new Strategic Plan for 2018-2021.

The Audit and Risk Committee approves the annual External Audit Plan, and the Internal Audit Programme including the scope for each internal audit. The current Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee has significant financial and audit experience. Good practice adopted by the Committee sees Members meet privately with both the College's external and internal auditors on an annual basis.

The chairing of the Remuneration Committee was reviewed in line with the refreshed Code of Good Governance issued in June 2016, with the Chair of the Committee now being the Chair of the HR Committee instead of the Regional Chair. Remuneration Committee Members are aware of the requirement to undertake the online training on the CDN Governance Hub. To date, all Committee Members have not yet completed this training. A new Senior Staff Pay Policy is currently under development. It was noted that once adopted, a process for consulting staff and students in relation to consideration of the Principal's salary is to be formalised.

The Board received a briefing on Charity Trustee Responsibilities from the College's solicitors, Burness Paull, at its meeting in February 2016. Relevant OSCR information and publications are highlighted and circulated to Board Members.

## **EFFECTIVENESS**

The College's Internal Auditor's, Wylie & Bisset, undertook a review of Corporate Governance in February 2017. This audit achieved an outcome of 'strong':

*"From our review we can conclude that the College has strong Governance arrangements and is complying with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. We can provide assurance that the College has robust policies in place, Board Members receive a detailed induction and training programme, self-reviews are carried out on an annual basis, the Board of Management are receiving detailed reports, Terms of Reference are clear and do not overlap across the Sub-Committees. We can also provide assurance that meetings are planned on an annual basis and that there are detailed programmes of work in place."*

Twenty areas of good practice (See Appendix 4) were identified along with two recommendation with a grading of 'low'.

In 2015, the Board established a Governance Steering Group. The remit of the Group is to support the Board in maintaining high standards of governance. This includes considering and approving amendments to the Board's Governance Manual; ensuring that the Board complies with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges; and considering any governance issues that arise centrally or in other college regions and any possible related implications or considerations for the Board of NESCol. The Governance Steering Group regularly reports on its work and any required actions for consideration at Board Meetings

demonstrating that continuous improvement is sought in order to ensure that the Board maintains high standards of governance.

The Regional Chair is viewed extremely positively by Board Members and the College's Senior Management Team, with the following feedback demonstrating this:

*"The Chair is very effective, efficient and inclusive."*

*"....extremely well-informed not just about the College sector but about the wider government policy agenda within which the College operates."*

*"The effectiveness of the Board is significantly enhanced by the skill set, knowledge and experience of the Chair."*

*"The discussions led and facilitated by the Chair are always clear, open and engaging."*

*".....works hard to ensure our respective skills bases are deployed to best effect."*

A skills matrix of the Board is maintained to ensure the Board and its Committees have the right balance of skills, experience and knowledge to effectively fulfil their roles. Board Members commented:

*"The Regional Chair works hard to ensure our respective skills bases are deployed to best effect."*

On appointment, Board Members receive a comprehensive induction to the College and the Board. In addition, the majority of Board Members have completed the national induction provided by CDN and those yet to complete this are being encouraged by both the Regional Chair and the Secretary to the Board. The training and development of Board Members are discussed at individual annual development meetings between each Member and the Regional Chair. Relevant external and internal training and development opportunities are publicised to Members throughout each academic year by the Secretary to the Board. Briefings are also arranged as appropriate for inclusion as part of agendas at Board and Committee meetings. CPD logs are maintained for each Member.

The Board has in place a comprehensive annual evaluation process which includes, an annual appraisal of the Regional Chair (conducted by the Vice Chair on behalf of the Board), evaluations of Committee Chairs, and annual one-to-one development meetings between the Regional Chair and individual Board Members.

Feedback from Board Members on the Board's effectiveness included:

*"I believe we have a very effective board which questions and probes but also a board which will listen."*

*"The Board's performance/operation is enhanced by highly effective and well networked Regional Chair and effective and efficient support provided by the Secretary to the Board."*

Comments from the Senior Management Team included:

*"The Board is always rigorous. However, the frequency and structure of meetings has meant that reporting becomes less meaningful/impactful. The current review of governance should address this."*

*"The Board governs effectively through well-established and well-embedded structures which have seen the College achieve much stability since merger. However, we are entering a phase whereby we need to become more effective in meeting the needs and aspirations of students and other stakeholders. Accordingly, some cognisance should be given to evolving Board structures, processes and practices in order that this College can become more effective and can 'move up through the gears' and become the best in Scotland."*

In addition to the planned review of governance practices and processes, the Board has acknowledged in terms of its membership that further diversity should be sought. The Governance Steering Group is currently considering how the Board's approach to recruitment could be refreshed to encourage applications from as diverse a range of individuals as possible and to ensure that the Board reflects the region's population as much as possible.

The Board is also aware that consideration towards succession planning is required as currently the terms of office of the majority of current Members fall on to dates – the end of October 2018 and the end of February 2019. A recommendation of the internal audit of Corporate Governance is for the Board to develop a succession planning policy to ensure that the effectiveness of the Board is not negatively affected through the possible change of membership.

#### **RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATION**

The Review has found that the Board is clearly committed to fostering good relationships with partner organisations and key stakeholders.

Feedback from both Board Members and members of the Senior Management Team demonstrated that good relationships between the Board and senior management exist.

A programme of observers which enables members of the Leadership Team attend Committee meetings was noted as an effective mechanism for further developing effective relationships between the Board and senior managers while also increase staff knowledge and awareness of how the Board and its Committees operate. As part of the upcoming governance review consideration will be given as to the interaction between the Board and members of College management and students, including the possible introduction of a Board Member Ambassador programme.

The Board plays a key role in ensuring effective relationships are maintained with key stakeholders in the region, including the two local universities, the two local authorities, and the two Community Planning Partnerships. Both Board Members and Senior Management Team Members commented that going forward opportunities to utilise Board Members existing contacts and networks should be sought.

NESCol is an Associate College of RGU and as such the institutions benefit from highly effective partnership working in a number of key areas including governance. The relationship is often highlighted throughout Scotland as a model of good practice. In recent years the Boards of the two institutions have held a number of joint events, including dinners, a joint Audit Committee Event and joint Board Member training. Board Members feedback from these activities has been very positive, with a commitment for the institutions to continue dialogue to identify future developments and opportunities for partnership working. Board Member training between the two institutions is also often extended to Governors from the University of Aberdeen.

At its Planning Event in November 2016, the Board discussed the need to strengthen the College's approach to stakeholder and employer engagement. As such a dinner with key regional employers, especially those from emerging sectors has been scheduled for the

beginning of June 2017. All Board Members and members of the Senior Management Team will be invited to attend.

Key stakeholders are often invited to speak at Board Meetings and at Board Planning Events.

At the time of the Review, discussions were being held regarding the possible holding of a joint Board event with Dundee and Angus College.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the following statements summarise the current effectiveness of the Board of North East Scotland College:

- Compliance with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges is strong, clearly demonstrated by the findings of the recent internal audit of Corporate Governance.
- The Board is effectively led by the Regional Chair, and is well-supported by the Secretary to the Board with robust governance practice and processes in place.
- The operation of the Board provides opportunities for open and honest exchanges.
- Decision making is transparent, informed, rigorous and timely and is supported by accurate and detailed associated documentation.
- The Board works well with the College's Senior Management Team.

From discussions held as part of this Review, it is evident that the relatively recent appointment of a new Principal has provided an opportune time to review governance arrangements and practices at the College.

The Board is clearly committed to ensuring it meets the requirements of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges, but is aware that to ensure the highest standards are maintained it must remain up-to-date with sector developments and identified good practice. The Board's proactive approach to this in establishing its Governance Steering Group reinforces this view.

It is clear that a period of reflection has commenced and that proposals to increase the Board's effectiveness will be considered at the Board's mid-year Planning Event in May 2017.

It is also evident that Board Members are aware of their role in maintaining high levels of governance and ensuring that the College continues to deliver the best outcomes for its learners:

*"We have an effective Board but that doesn't mean we get complacent!"*

*"We want to make NESCol the region's 'go-to' place for students, employers, partners and other stakeholders*

*"The Board will continue to be forward looking and ambitious for NESCol."*

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Board of North East Scotland College has committed to addressing the following areas to further enhance its effectiveness:

Code of Good Governance Principle	Area for Development	Actions Required	Responsibility	Timescale
Leadership and Strategy	Business Development Strategy	Consultation with the Board as appropriate New Strategy to be implemented and monitored	Board supported by the SMT	December 2017
Quality of the Student Experience	Partnership Agreement with Students' Association	Creation of the first Partnership Agreement between the Board and Students' Association Consultation with Board and College as appropriate	Student Board Members working with the Students' Association and Board, supported by sparqs	December 2017
Accountability	Review of current governance processes and practices	Review all Terms of Reference Review all Programmes of Business Develop new format for Board and Committee agendas and papers Utilise College's new intranet Review Programme of Committee meetings	Secretary to the Board	June 2017
Accountability	Risk Management	Develop refreshed approach Adopt risk appetite statement Develop new Strategic Risk Register	Board supported by the SMT and Secretary to the Board	September 2017
Accountability	Remuneration Committee Training	All Members of the Committee to complete online CDN training course	Remuneration Committee Members	December 2017
Accountability	Senior Staff Pay Policy	New Policy to be developed and consulted upon as appropriate	Remuneration Committee	July 2017

Code of Good Governance Principle	Area for Development	Actions Required	Responsibility	Timescale
Effectiveness	Board Diversity	Review Board Member Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Processes	Regional Chair with Governance Steering Group and Secretary to the Board	September 2017
Effectiveness	Succession Planning Policy for Board Members	Policy to be developed, including new approach to Board Member Terms of Office	Regional Chair with Governance Steering Group	July 2017
Relationships and Collaboration	Employer/Stakeholder Engagement	Increase Board's role Utilise Board Member contacts and networks	Board supported by the SMT	December 2017
Relationships and Collaboration	Board Ambassador Programme	Develop guidance on operation of Programme Pilot approach	Secretary to the Board	November 2017

<b>BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE</b>
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The following survey was issued to all Board Members. A selection of the comments submitted under Part 2 have been included in the body of this Report.

As Members will be aware the Board is required to undertake an externally facilitated effectiveness review. Part of this review involves the capturing of the views of Members in relation to Board performance to date and areas for future development. It would therefore be appreciated if Members could complete the following questions. The results from this survey will be collated anonymously and shared with the review's independent facilitators.

**Part 1**

Please evaluate the Board's performance to date in relation to the following statements:

**Leadership and Strategy**

The Board determines and clearly communicates the College's vision, strategic direction, educational character, values and ethos.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	5	0	0

**Quality of the Student Experience**

The Board has close regard to the voice of its students and the quality of the student experience is central to all Board decisions.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11	2	2	0

**Accountability**

The Board ensures that its decision-making processes are transparent, properly informed, rigorous and timely.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12	3	0	0

**Effectiveness**

The Board and its Committees have the appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge of the body to enable them to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities effectively.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	6	1	0

**Relationships and Collaboration**

The Board encourages and supports effective partnership working and collaboration within and across regions to address local needs and meet national priorities and specialisms.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	6	0	0

Part 2

Reflecting upon the answers you have provided above, please identify any areas for development you believe the Board should address during AY2017-18:

Leadership and Strategy

Quality of the Student Experience

Accountability

Effectiveness

Relationships and Collaboration

Please record below any other comments you wish to make in relation to the current performance and operation of the Board

Thank you for taking the time to share your views.

<b>SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM QUESTIONNAIRE</b>
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The following survey was issued to the four members of the College's Senior Management Team. A selection of the comments submitted under Part 2 have been included in the body of this Report.

As discussed at recent Board Meetings, the Board is required to undertake an externally facilitated effectiveness review. Part of this review involves the capturing of the views of the Senior Management Team in relation to Board performance to date and areas for future development. It would therefore be appreciated if you could please take some time to complete the following questions. The results from this survey will be collated anonymously and shared with the review's independent facilitators.

**Part 1**

Please evaluate the Board's performance to date in relation to the following statements:

**Leadership and Strategy**

The Board provides clear strategic direction for the College and the Senior Management Team.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	1	0

**Quality of the Student Experience**

The Board has close regard to the voice of its students and ensures that the quality of the student experience is central to all Board decisions.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	1	0

**Accountability**

The Board provides constructive challenge to the Principal and the Senior Management Team and holds them to account.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	3	0	0

**Effectiveness**

The Board ensures that its decision-making processes are transparent, properly informed, rigorous and timely, and that appropriate and effective systems of financial and operational control, quality, management of staff, risk assessment and management are established, monitored, continuously improved and appropriately impact assessed.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	3	0	0

**Relationships and Collaboration**

The Board encourages and supports effective partnership working and collaboration within and across regions to address local needs and meet national priorities and specialisms.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	3	0	0

Part 2

Reflecting upon the answers you have provided above, please identify any areas for development you believe the Board should address during AY2017-18:

Leadership and Strategy

Quality of the Student Experience

Accountability

Effectiveness

Relationships and Collaboration

Please record below any other comments you wish to make in relation to the current performance and operation of the Board

Thank you for taking the time to share your views.

**DESKTOP REVIEW OF EVIDENCE**

The following evidence was considered as part of the Review:

**Compliance**

- Governance Manual Code of Conduct, incl. Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Board and Committee Terms of Reference
- Wylie & Bisset Internal Audit of Corporate Governance, February

**Process**

- Board and Committee agendas, minutes and papers - <http://www.nescol.ac.uk/about/governance>
- Corporate Documents – Outcome Agreement, Strategic Plan & supporting Strategies, Risk Register - <http://www.nescol.ac.uk/about/strategic-planning>
- Board Member Annual Development Meeting Records
- Skills Matrix
- Selection of Internal Audit Reports (x6)

**Board Member Views**

- Board Member Review Questionnaire Results
- Wylie & Bisset Questionnaire Results from Corporate Governance Internal Audit
- Committee Chair Annual Development Meeting Records, incl. Committee Members Survey Results on performance of Committee Chair

**Staff and Student Views**

- Senior Management Team Review Questionnaire Results
- Investors in People Report
- Student Satisfaction Survey 2015-16 Results
- SFC Benchmarking Data Student Satisfaction 2015-16
- First Impressions Survey 2016-17 Results

## WYLIE &amp; BISSET INTERNAL AUDIT OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, FEBRUARY 2017

## List of areas where the College is operating effectively and following good practice

1	The College's Governance Manual includes detailed Terms of Reference for the Board and each of its standing committees. This is published on the College website. We can confirm that these are clear and concise and there is no overlap between the committees.
2	The College has a comprehensive Code of Conduct in place for Board Members which is published on the College website and included within the Governance Manual. This document covers the following areas; Introduction to the Code of Conduct; Key principals of the Code of Conduct; General Conduct (covers areas such as gifts and hospitality, confidentiality and remuneration, allowances and expenses); Registrations of Interests, Declaration of Interests and Lobbying & Access to Members of Public Bodies. This complies with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.
3	The College have a robust set of Financial Regulations in place that are reviewed on an annual basis and approved by the Board of Management. The Financial Regulations clearly state the Financial Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Management and Sub-Committees.
4	The College keep a detailed Register of Interests document which is published on the College website. An annual declaration of interest is made by all Board Members and is updated when an interest is registered during the year. This is stated in the Governance Manual and is in line with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.
5	All new Board Members receive an induction and training manual upon appointment to the Board of Management.
6	The College has a Gifts and Hospitality section within the Governance Manual which details the circumstances under which Board Members and Senior Management may and may not accept gifts or hospitality.
7	The College encourage a strong Student Association. The Student Association are provided with the opportunity to report at each Learning & Teaching and Students Services Committee and there is always a report and presentation by the Association at the annual Board Planning event.
8	The information provided to the committees is clear, concise and user-friendly to aid the committees in fulfilling their duties. We received feedback from a sample of Board Members who all stated that the information provided is of a high quality, received in a timely manner and helps aid decision making.
9	The College has a Governance Steering Group in place with the aim to "support the Board of Management in maintaining a high standard of governance". This group looks to discuss and review the current requirements and best practices regarding Corporate Governance and provide a report to the Board of Management with recommendations.
10	The College has a robust Whistleblowing Policy in place that is available to all staff on the College website. This is in line with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. In addition, and in line with the Code of Good Governance, the Board has appointed a Senior Independent Member who provides a sounding board for the Chair and serves as an intermediary for the Principal, other Board Members and the Board Secretary when necessary. The Senior Independent Member is also available where contact through the normal channels of Chair, Principal or Secretary has failed to resolve an issue or for which such contact is inappropriate.
11	The College keep a Board of Management Skills Matrix which is updated on an annual basis.

12	The timing of the Board of Management and Sub-Committee meetings is confirmed at the start of the year and the College prepare a document which is published on the website. This document states the date, time and place of the Board of Management meetings and the Sub-Committee meetings.
13	The College has an Anti-Bribery and Corruption statement within the Governance Manual and an Anti-Bribery Policy which is in line with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.
14	The College has a robust Equality and Diversity Policy in place which is subject to regular review. The College also monitor this and report on it within the Financial Statements. This is in line with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.
15	The Board of Management and the Sub-Committees have clear Terms of Reference and the duties are all discharged. There is also no overlap between the duties of committees.
16	The Board of Management is subject to an annual review which includes a review of its effectiveness against the Code of Good Governance. The Sub Committee Chairs are also subject to an annual review by the Regional Chair and the Regional Chair is also subject to an annual review by the Vice Chair. This review allows Board Members to comment on the performance of the Regional Chair.
17	All Board of Management and Sub-Committee meetings during 2016/17 were quorate.
18	We provided a questionnaire to a sample of Board members. The results of this showed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Board members are satisfied with how the Board is run and feel there are strong controls in place for governance.</li> <li>• All Board members feel that there is a thorough induction process in place.</li> <li>• All Board members feel that information received is of a high quality and sufficient.</li> <li>• All Board members feel that sufficient training and induction is provided.</li> <li>• All Board members feel that there is an appropriate programme of work in place.</li> <li>• All Board members state attendance is properly monitored.</li> <li>• All Board members state that there is an appropriate annual review carried out.</li> <li>• All Board members feel there is an appropriate skills mix on the Board of Management.</li> <li>• All Board members state that the risk register is properly monitored and discussed.</li> </ul>
19	The College has clear programmes of work in place for the Board of Management and the Sub-Committees. The Head of Planning and Corporate Governance also reviews the agendas to ensure the programme of work is being followed.
20	The College has a clear structure in place which is governed by a comprehensive Governance Manual that conforms with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.