

## External Board Review Halesowen College Summary and Action Plan

Reviewer: Rob Lawson *April 2024*

### Summary

This External Board Review (EBR) considers principles from Codes of Governance (including the AoC Code of Good Governance), the Education Inspection Framework and the DfE's guidance on EBRs. The full report sets out the findings made against the three Board dimensions with key evidence that informs those findings. The following table summarizes some of the headline strengths and areas for development:

	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>
BOARD MAKE UP	The large Board has a great balance of skills, experience and backgrounds. Excellent chairs and curious and committed governors. The Board needed more financial and FE experience, but recent recruitment has addressed both these issues.	There is currently a gender imbalance on the Board, but this is being addressed and by the end of this academic year, there will be 53 per cent female and 47 per cent male.  Governors occasionally become too operational in approach.
BOARD SYSTEMS	Effective committee structure Agendas and minute reporting.	Improve the student voice, including appointment of a second student governor. Explore how to make Board/committee packs shorter and more accessible.
BOARD RELATIONSHIPS	Professional working relationship between Board and the executive team; triumvirate relationship is strong. Challenge and scrutiny is good from some governors.	Challenge needs to be more widespread. Support is needed for the Clerk to the Corporation.

The overall conclusion is that there is strong evidence that the Board is highly proficient and consistently impacts positively on college strategy, effectiveness, and outcomes.

*Board EBR action plan.*

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Intended outcome</b>	<b>Named lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Board Makeup</b>	<i>Search for a further FE Experienced governor alongside any other areas identified where skills need strengthening.</i>	<i>Increased diversity of perspective and understanding.</i>	<i>Personnel Committee D of G</i>	<i>2024/2025 Cycle</i>
	<i>Appointment of current co-optees to full board membership.</i>	<i>Address gender imbalance and increased business representation.</i>	<i>Personnel Committee D of G</i>	<i>July 2024</i>
	<i>Place the new Accountability Agreement and Self-Assessment outcomes on Corporation website pages.</i>	<i>Improved openness and accessibility.</i>	<i>D of G</i>	<i>August 2024</i>
	<i>Agree a policy or statement which clearly delineates the roles of governors and members of the executive team.</i>	<i>Increased clarity and less operational discussion.</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>July 2024</i>
<b>Board Systems</b>	<i>Consider appointment of a second student governor and other mechanisms for student voice.</i>	<i>Improve the student voice.</i>	<i>Corporation  Principal/Corporation</i>	<i>July 2024</i>
	<i>Agree and implement a new accessible platform.</i>	<i>Improved accessibility/ Effectiveness.</i>	<i>Chair/Principal/D of G</i>	<i>January 2025  2024/2025</i>

	<p><i>Consider how to make Board /Committee packs shorter.</i></p> <p><i>Embed revised cover sheets.</i></p> <p><i>Reinstate hyperlinked agendas.</i></p>			<p><i>Cyle</i></p> <p><i>Summer Term 2024.</i></p>
	<p><i>Embed Chair's 121 annual reviews.</i></p>	<p><i>Effective self-assessment and development.</i></p>	<p><i>Chair D of G</i></p>	<p><i>August 2024</i></p>
	<p><i>Continue work to streamline the risk register.</i></p>	<p><i>Effective board pack/metrics.</i></p> <p><i>Clarity of focus on risk.</i></p>	<p><i>CFO</i></p>	<p><i>January 2025</i></p>
	<p><i>Consider risk reporting as part of committees.</i></p>	<p><i>Committee ownership.</i></p>	<p><i>CFO Corporation</i></p>	<p><i>January 2025</i></p>
	<p><i>Office of the Governance Professional.</i></p>	<p><i>Change the title of the role to Director of Governance.</i></p> <p><i>Explore how to provide support to the role.</i></p>	<p><i>Chair/Principal</i></p>	<p><i>January 2025</i></p>
	<p><i>Consult with members on meeting times.</i></p>	<p><i>Fit for purpose meeting structure that supports attendance and recruitment.</i></p>	<p><i>Chair/D of G</i></p>	<p><i>July 2024</i></p>
<p><b>Board Relationships</b></p>	<p><i>Increase challenge to be shared by all governors.</i></p>	<p><i>Greater evidence of shared responsibility and support of succession planning.</i></p>	<p><i>Chair</i></p>	<p><i>2024/2025 cycle</i></p>
	<p><i>Succession plan needed to replace the current Chair.</i></p>	<p><i>Discuss with members and put in place any necessary training and or recruitment.</i></p>	<p><i>D of G</i></p>	<p><i>January 2025</i></p>