

## Self-assessment on management and governance: further education colleges and sixth form colleges

Provider's name: Coventry College

Provider's UKPRN: 10003010

### **Your management and governance arrangements**

Coventry College is a large further education college serving the communities of Coventry and Warwickshire. The college was formed on 1 August 2017, following the merger of City College, Coventry with Henley College, Coventry.

The college has two main sites: Henley Campus, located in the north east of Coventry, and the City Campus, located in central Coventry. Courses available at the college include study programmes, adult learning programmes, courses for learners with high needs, apprenticeships and Higher Education (HE). The majority of the college's 6500 learners study vocational qualifications.

The city of Coventry has a population of some 360,000. Service industries provide the main source of employment, including business services, education, public administration, and health services. Engineering and manufacturing companies are also significant employers across the city. The proportion of people in Coventry aged 16 and over with qualifications at NVQ 3 and above is higher than for the West Midlands, but lower than that reported nationally

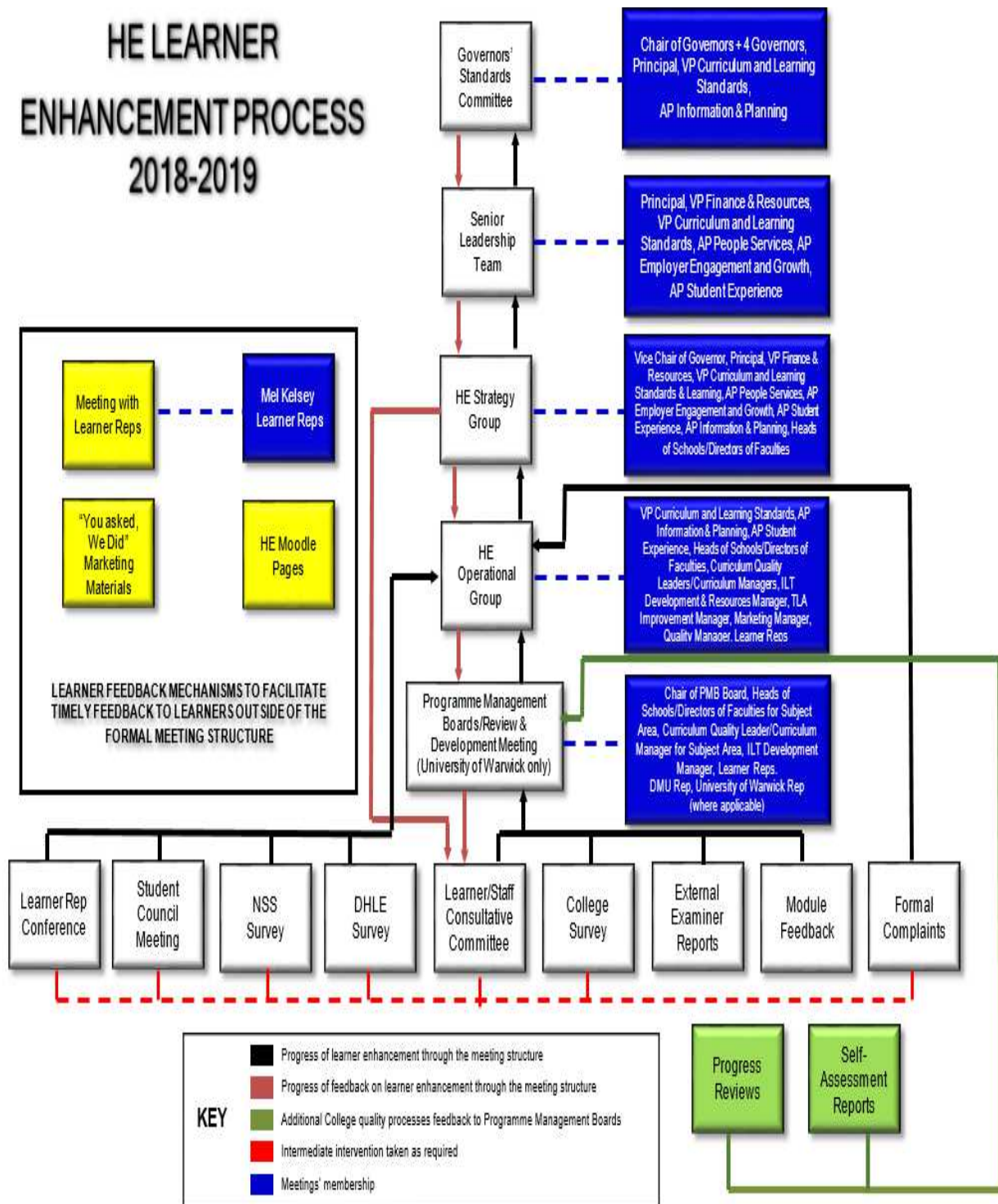
Coventry College is an experienced deliverer of higher education programmes and our provision has grown to include validation agreements with HEI partners and Pearson EdExcel. Higher Education currently makes up a small percentage of the Colleges overall turnover delivering to approximately 80 students.

The College partners with the following institution;

Warwick University (Validated provision – Teacher Training and Social Studies)

The College structure for the management of Higher Education is as follows;

# HE LEARNER ENHANCEMENT PROCESS 2018-2019

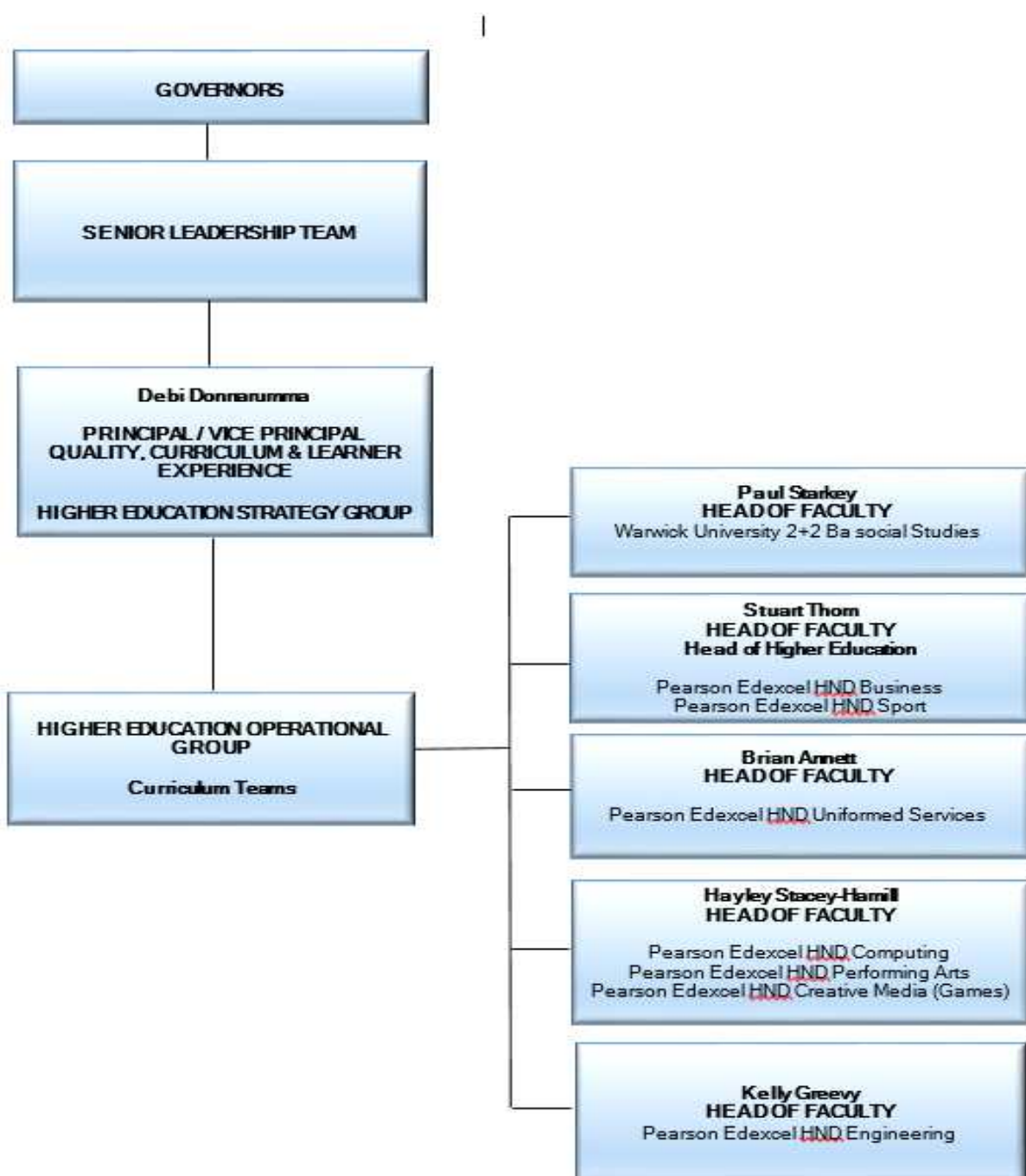


The following committee structure is in place to ensure adequate governance arrangements are in place;

The Higher Education provision is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Head of Higher Education and the curriculum areas, who takes decisions at an operational level. All policy, quality matters, curriculum development activities and student voice initiatives are discussed and approved at the HE Strategy Group, which in turn reports to the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Governors through the quality department to ensure wider compliance and overview of the HE provision.

The HE Strategy Group has its own terms of reference and delegates some of its powers from time to time to the Operational group where relevant and appropriate. We believe that this structure provides the adequate level of control for an institution of our size and level of HE provision.

## Higher Education Management



### **Self-assessment of your management and governance arrangements**

Coventry College follows the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges published in March 2015 by the Association of Colleges (AoC). We have used the Code since its publication, and prior to that we followed its predecessor, the Foundation Code of Governance.

The Clerk to the Corporation reviews compliance with this Code on an annual basis, with findings considered by the College's Audit & Risk Committee.

This Code was prepared for colleges of Further Education, which represents the majority of teaching at Coventry College. However, the Code is not specific to the College's Further Education functions, and was drafted by the AoC with regard to other relevant codes, including the UK Corporate Code, the Charity Commission Code and the Higher Education Code of Governance. The principles cover the key areas of the HE Code of Governance, and is therefore appropriate to our higher education activity.

## Public interest governance principles

### Standard public interest governance principles: applicable to all providers

<p><b>Academic freedom:</b> Academic staff at an English higher education provider have freedom within the law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) to question and test received wisdom; and</li><li>(b) to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions;</li></ul> <p>without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider.</p>	<p>Academic freedom is enshrined in our Instrument &amp; Articles of Governance, reviewed in April 2016. Article 14 states “the Corporation shall have regard to the need to ensure that academic staff at the institution have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without putting themselves at risk of losing their jobs or any privileges which they may enjoy at the institution.”</p> <p>This is reinforced by the College’s adopted Academic Freedom Policy (2015).</p>
<p><b>Accountability:</b> The provider operates openly, honestly, accountably and with integrity and demonstrates the values appropriate to be recognised as an English higher education provider.</p>	<p>Accountability is covered by our chosen governance Code at Chapter 2, requiring the College to “conduct its affairs as openly and transparently as possible”, “meeting all legal and regulatory requirements”, ensuring that stakeholders “are given honest, accurate and timely information about all aspects of provision” and ensuring that Board members operate “in line with accepted standards in public life”.</p>
<p><b>Student engagement:</b> The governing body ensures that all students have opportunities to engage with the governance of the provider, and that this allows for a range of perspectives to have influence.</p>	<p>Student engagement is covered by our chosen governance code at Chapter 3, which provides that: “The board must have close regard to the voice of its students and the quality of the student experience, which should be central to all board decisions..... Students should be actively engaged in the college and ways should be found to ensure that the student voice is heard through both college and student led processes. The board should receive regular reports on how students are being engaged and what impact their voice is having on college life.”</p>
<p><b>Academic governance:</b> The governing body receives and tests assurance that academic governance is adequate and effective through explicit protocols with the Senate/Academic Board (or equivalent).</p>	<p>The governing body receives and tests assurance of the adequacy of academic governance through termly consideration by the College’s Quality of Learning, Teaching &amp; Assessment Committee of relevant reports and of the minutes of the Academic Board. The Terms of Reference for which were introduced in 2017 to strengthen the governing body’s assurance of academic governance. The governing body also reviews the annual provider report and receives periodical external assurance.</p>
<p><b>Risk management:</b> The provider operates comprehensive corporate risk management and control arrangements (including for academic risk) to ensure the sustainability of the provider’s operations, and its ability to continue to</p>	<p>Chapter 6 of the College’s chosen governance code includes the following requirements: “The board must adopt an affordable financial strategy and plans which are compatible with the duty to ensure sustainability and solvency of the college.”</p>

<p>comply with all of its conditions of registration.</p>	<p>“The board must adopt effective systems of control and risk management that promote value for money, efficient use of the capital estate and technology, meet mandatory audit requirements, and produce accurate and quality-assured college data.”</p> <p>“The board must ensure that a statement on internal controls explaining the risk management arrangements that are in operation is contained in the corporate governance section of the audited financial statements.”</p> <p>“The board must comply with the funding agencies mandatory requirements relating to audit including adherence to the Joint Audit Code of Practice (JACOP), which sets out the minimum requirements. The board should approve an annual audit plan linked to the college’s risk register and be confident in the expertise and quality of any internal auditors engaged by the college. The board should consider using different sets of expertise for different audit requirements.”</p> <p>“The audit committee must support the board and the principal by reviewing the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances including the college’s governance, risk management and internal control framework and produce an annual audit report for the board.”</p>
<p><b>Value for money:</b> The governing body ensures that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to provide transparency about value for money for students and (where a provider has access to the student support system or to grant funding) for taxpayers.</p>	<p>The requirement to adopt effective systems of control to promote value for money are set out in Chapter 6 of the governance code quoted above.</p> <p>The effectiveness of the systems of control in promoting value for money is reviewed annually through the Audit &amp; Risk Committee’s annual audit report to all governors (including student and staff governors) and through external audit of the corporate governance section of the College’s financial statements. These documents are published on the College’s website.</p>
<p><b>Freedom of speech:</b> The governing body takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured within the provider.</p>	<p>The existing policy statement on Freedom of Speech has been updated to reflect current practice and is due to be approved by the Corporation Board in September 2019.</p>
<p><b>Governing body:</b> The size, composition, diversity, skills mix, and terms of office of the governing body is appropriate for the nature, scale and complexity of the provider.</p>	<p>The College’s chosen governance code requires in Chapter 9 that “the board and its committees should be of an appropriate size and have the appropriate balance of skills, experience and knowledge to enable them to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively” and that the College has a policy “to ensure that it has the appropriate diversity of skills, experience, and</p>

	backgrounds to provide strong governance, and to identify any need for new governors with particular skills”.
<b>Fit and proper:</b> Members of the Governing Body, those with senior management responsibilities, and individuals exercising control or significant influence over the provider, are fit and proper persons.	In accordance with the College’s Instrument of Governance (clauses 4, 7 and 9), classes of persons who are not fit and proper are ineligible to be appointed as governors and can be removed from office if they become ineligible after appointment. Similar provisions are included within employment contracts of senior staff as appropriate. All members of the Corporation Board are required to confirm continued eligibility on an annual basis.
Additional public interest governance principle: providers authorised with degree awarding powers	
<b>Records:</b> Where degree awarding powers are solely contained in the provider’s governing documents, and no order either under section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under HERA exists, the provisions setting out those powers must be retained and may not be altered without the consent of the OfS	Not applicable
<b>Additional public interest governance principles: providers in receipt of financial support</b>	
<b>Independent members of the governing body:</b> <i>There must be at least one external member of the governing body who is independent of the provider, and whose term of office is normally limited to a maximum of three terms of three years or two terms of four years. For providers with large governing bodies, or more complex legal forms, additional independent members may be appropriate.</i>	<i>The College’s Instrument and Articles of Governance (2016) require the appointment of at least one* and up to 16 independent members. (Instrument, Clause 2. *In practice, a minimum of 3 would be required to allow the appointment of a Chair and two Vice-Chairs, who must be independent members under clause 5). The Corporation Board may determine the number within this range.</i>  <i>The College’s Standing Orders (clause 2) set out the current determination, that there shall be 12 independent members, whose appointment is normally limited to two terms of four years.</i>
<b>Regularity, propriety and value for Money:</b> The governing body ensures that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to ensure public funds are managed appropriately, in line with the conditions of grant and the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money, and to protect the interests of taxpayers and other stakeholders. This also applies to any funds passed to another entity for the provision of facilities or learning and teaching, or for research to be undertaken.	These requirements are set out in Chapter 6 of the College’s chosen code of governance.  The College’s Instrument and Articles of Governance (2016) require the appointment of an audit committee (Articles, clause 5). The College’s Standing Orders specify the terms of reference of the Audit & Risk Committee at Appendix B1. These include:  - oversight of the College’s externally provided internal audit arrangements, including the commissioning of topical assurance reports and consideration of an annual report by the internal audit provider

- provision of an annual report for the Corporation and accounting officer, which must:
  - (a) include the committee's own view on the "adequacy and effectiveness of the College's systems of internal control and its arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes, and securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money)"
  - (b) "be submitted to the Corporation before the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control in the accounts is signed"
  - (c) "be submitted to the relevant funding body with the annual accounts"

The College complies with the Joint Audit Code of Practice issued by the EFA and SFA (JACOP) and with the Nolan principles – these are requirements of the chosen code of governance. The requirements are further reinforced by the College's adoption of a Code of Conduct for Corporation Members (revised December 2017), based on a model prepared by Eversheds Solicitors for use within the FE Sector.