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Convener  
Education, Children and Young People Committee  
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13 January 2023

Dear Sue,

## GOVERNANCE IN COLLEGES

Thank you for your letter of 1 December 2022 concerning the governance of colleges in Scotland.

The [Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges](#), which was revised in 2016, sets out the principles of good college governance and promotes accountability in the college sector. As set out by the Code, College Boards must ensure that they are meeting both their statutory duties and the terms and conditions of their grant.

Regional College Boards are accountable to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) who act as the sector's main funding body and the SFC hold colleges accountable through ensuring the delivery of their outcome agreements. College Boards are also accountable to a wide range of stakeholders including students, staff and local communities, as set out by the Code of Governance.

Regional College Chairs, who are directly appointed by Scottish Ministers, have their performance appraised by the Scottish Government and Chairs of assigned incorporated colleges will have their performance appraised by the relevant Regional Strategic Body (RSB). The appraisal process ensures continued direct accountability of College Chairs and forms a key requirement of any Chair reappointment.

Ultimately, Scottish Ministers have the power to remove all board members of an incorporated college, or a regional board, with the exception of the Principal, for serious breaches of a term and condition of grant.

The Scottish Government continues to work with stakeholders through the Good Governance Steering Group, to improve governance and accountability in the further education sector and following the pandemic has restarted work around the Good Governance Task Group's recommendations that were made in 2016.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

Yours sincerely,

**SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE**

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