



EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE

FE & Skills Governance Award



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About

Awarded by Pro Excellence Partnership, this newly developed sector specific accreditation allows organisations to be recognised for their exemplary governance arrangements.

What is Excellence In Governance?

The Excellence in Governance award is an independently validated accreditation designed to recognise, benchmark and improve governance across Further Education Colleges, Independent Training Providers (ITPs), and Adult and Community Learning organisations.

It offers a structured framework and external endorsement to ensure that an organisation's governance:

- Meets national and statutory standards
- Enhances learner outcomes
- Is compliant, ethical and impactful
- Is effective and or exemplary

The accreditation fully aligns with:

- The Nolan Principles of Public Life, ensuring ethical and transparent leadership
- The Department for Education (DfE) External Governance Review (ERG) Guidance, which mandates triennial independent reviews of governance for FE Colleges and designated institutions
- The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF), specifically the Leadership & Management judgement which assesses the effectiveness of governance
- The AoC Code of Good Governance, which sets out best practice for FE boards in areas such as oversight, inclusivity and strategy



Why Governance Matters in FE & Skills



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Governance in FE and Skills is more than legal compliance – it is the foundation for high-performing, ethical, and accountable education organisations.

Effective governance ensures:

- Clear strategic direction and curriculum intent
- Financial resilience and risk management
- Oversight of safeguarding and learner welfare
- Responsive engagement with stakeholders and employers
- Ethical leadership, integrity and public confidence

As scrutiny from regulators and funding bodies intensifies, organisations must be able to actively demonstrate:

- Oversight, accountability and expertise
- Impact on learner outcomes
- Ethical and inclusive decision-making
- Value-for-money and funding assurance

The DfE now requires all FE Colleges and Designated Institutions to undertake an external governance review every three years. Independent Training Provider's are required to explain their approach to governance. This demonstrates the growing need for independent scrutiny and continuous development of your governance arrangements. **The Excellence in Governance Award can help you achieve this.**



What is involved?

1. Scoping & Planning

- Initial consultation to confirm structure, purpose and expectations
- Agreement of scope, timelines and pre-review documentation

2. Desk-Based Review

- Analysis of board minutes, risk registers, SARs/QIPs, policy frameworks, compliance documents

3. Fieldwork

- Structured interviews with governors, senior leaders and key postholders
- Thematic review of governance behaviour, strategy and impact

4. Interim Report & Action Plan (Where required)

- Interim written report and action plan, with identified areas for development to achieve accreditation.
- Mini review of actions completed,

5. Scrutiny Panel Review

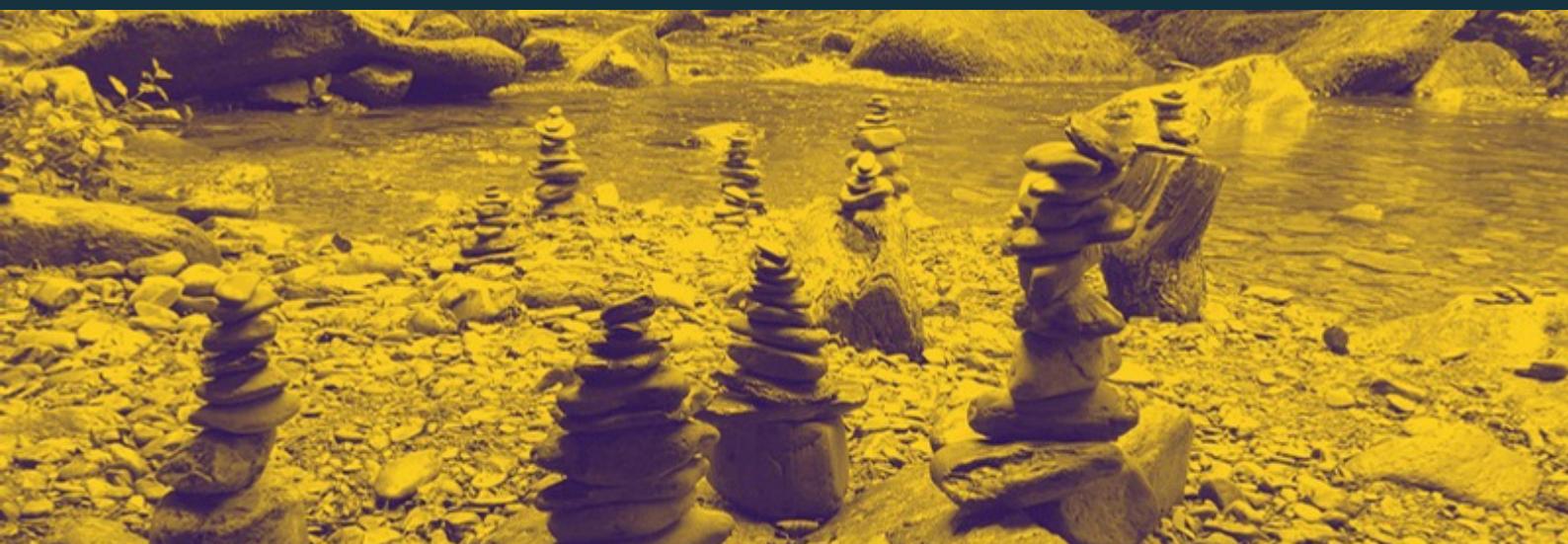
- Review of findings, actions taken and proposed grade
- Award achievement

6. Final Report

- Comprehensive written report with performance ratings using our matrix
- Commentary on strengths, areas for development, and recommendations

7. Award & Recognition

- Excellence in Governance Certificate and branding
- Public register listing
- 2-year accreditation (with optional annual review)





Assessment Matrix & Ratings



Each domain is rated on a 4-point scale:

- 4 - Exemplary
- 3 - Effective
- 2 - Developing
- 1 - Limited

Accreditation Levels:

- **Exemplary Governance:** Most domains at level 4
- **Effective Governance:** All domains at least level 3
- **Not Yet Accredited:** One or more domains below level 3 (support offered)





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