# ATTENDANCE AT AND ACCESS TO MEETINGS POLICY

## 1. Purpose

1.1. This policy sets out the principles governing attendance at meetings of the Corporation of Shrewsbury College and its committees, ensuring that business is conducted effectively, transparently and in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government.

1.2. The Corporation is committed to:

- Effective and accountable governance.
- Openness and transparency wherever appropriate.
- Protecting confidential and sensitive information.
- Ensuring that meetings are conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

## 2. Attendance at Meetings

2.1. The following may attend Corporation meetings as of right:

- Members of the Corporation.
- The Clerk to the Corporation.
- The Principal and Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government.

2.2. The Corporation may invite specific employees to attend meetings to provide relevant information or advice. They may participate in discussions, but they do not have voting rights

2.3. The Corporation or its committees may invite officers, professional advisers or other individuals to attend meetings where their attendance will assist the conduct of business. They may attend when appropriate and participate in discussions, but they do not have voting rights.

## 3. Privacy of Meetings

3.1. Although most Corporation business is not confidential; meetings shall be held in private.

3.2. Members of the public, college staff (who are not staff governors or members of the senior leadership team and officers invited to present reports) and the press may not attend by default.

3.3. Attendance by observers shall be subject to approval by the Corporation, committee or Chair, as appropriate. Requests to attend should be made through the Clerk to the Corporation.

3.4. Observers may attend only for those parts of meetings for which approval has been granted and do not have speaking or voting rights unless invited to contribute by the Chair.

## 4. Confidentiality and Withdrawal from Meetings

4.1. Members and attendees shall comply with the Corporation's requirements relating to confidentiality, declarations of interest and standards of conduct.

4.2. Individuals may be required to withdraw from meetings where:

- Required by the Instrument and Articles of Government.
- A conflict of interest exists.
- Confidential or restricted business is being considered.
- The Chair or Corporation determines that withdrawal is appropriate.

4.3. Staff must withdraw when discussions concern their own role or those of more senior staff, including:

- Appointment
- Remuneration
- Conditions of service
- Promotion
- Conduct
- Suspension, dismissal, or retirement.

4.4. Governors with a financial interest in college-related goods or services in the supply of work or goods to the college, are not required to withdraw when that matter is under consideration. However, they must not participate in discussion or vote and shall not be counted in the quorum for that item. The Corporation and/or member concerned should consider whether withdrawal from the meeting would be more appropriate.

4.5. Student governors must withdraw when:

- Their own conduct is under discussion.
- Requested by any member during staff-related matters (e.g. the appointment, remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement of any member of staff).

4.6. Regardless of withdrawal, they must not participate in discussion or vote.

**5. Publication of Information**

The Corporation will publish agendas, minutes and other governance information in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government and its publication arrangements, subject to the exclusion of confidential or exempt information.

**6. Review**

This policy shall be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and governance requirements which could be issued by the Clerk whenever observer attendance is approved.

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## 🧭 Guidance Note: Observing Corporation and Committee Meetings

### 🎯 Purpose of This Guide

To help observers understand their role, expectations, and boundaries when attending meetings of the Corporation.

### ✅ Who Can Attend as an Observer

- Observers are not automatically entitled to attend.
- Anyone wishing to observe must contact the **Clerk to the Corporation** in advance.
- The Clerk will liaise with the **Chair** to present the request to the Corporation for approval.

### 📌 What to Expect

- Meetings are held in private, even if business is not confidential.
- If approved, you may attend but **do not have speaking rights** unless specifically invited.
- You may be asked to **withdraw** during confidential items.

### 🔒 Confidentiality

- Some agenda items may be sensitive or confidential.
- The Chair will indicate when observers must leave the room.
- Observers are expected to respect the privacy of discussions and not share details externally.

### 🗣️ Conduct and Etiquette

- Arrive promptly and dress appropriately.
- Remain silent unless invited to speak.
- Avoid using mobile devices or recording equipment.

### 📞 Contact

For requests or questions, please contact: **Clerk to the Corporation**
tracyc@shrewsbury.ac.uk