



About the Association of Colleges

We are seeking to appoint a new **Director of Member Engagement** to join our Senior Leadership Team and play a critical role in strengthening AoC’s relationship with its member colleges at a time of significant change for the sector.

The Association of Colleges (AoC) is the national representative body for further education colleges in England. We have very high membership numbers and recent surveys show that member satisfaction is also high, but the world is changing fast, and the expectations on and challenges for colleges are increasing. We need to respond to those changes and ensure our support and advocacy for our members remains high quality, respected and valued.

This is a newly created role to help us do that, reporting to the Chief Executive, with responsibility for **leading AoC’s membership engagement, regional member services and governance offer**, ensuring a coherent, high-quality and consistent experience for member colleges across England.

The postholder will provide strategic leadership to AoC’s regional structure, drive proactive and data-informed engagement with members and stakeholders, and be a part of the overall senior leadership team. This role will help maintain our position as a trusted, influential and indispensable partner to colleges at both national and regional level.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Director of Member Engagement

Job Purpose: Accountable for leading AoC’s membership engagement, regional member services and governance offer , ensuring a coherent, high-quality and consistent experience for member colleges across England. The postholder will provide strategic leadership to AoC’s regional structure, drive proactive and data-informed engagement with members and stakeholders, and be a part of the overall Senior Leadership Team (SLT). This role will help maintain AoC’s position as a trusted, influential and indispensable partner to colleges at both national and regional level.	
Department / Directorate	Member Services / Chief Executive’s Office
Business Unit	AoC
Reports To	Chief Executive
Role Level	Leadership Level

Contract Type	Permanent, full-time 37.5 hours per week
Location	<i>Mobile-Hybrid:</i> this role may be home-based or London-office-based, with hybrid working including at least monthly travel to the AoC's London office and regular visits to AoC offices in Chorley (Lancashire), Wolverhampton and Stoke Sub Hamdon (Somerset) as well as regular travel throughout AoC's nine regions across England.
People Management	Direct Reports: 10 including 9 x Area Directors; and 1 x Governance Manager Indirect Reports: 10 including 4 x Member Services Managers, 5 x Member Services Coordinators; and 1 x Governance Officer
Monetary and Risk Responsibility	Budget: contributes to retention of membership subscriptions and supporting income generation via funded projects and wider AoC services. Risk Management: leadership responsibility as part of SLT for managing organisational risks in line with the risk register, as well as departmental risks, potential reputational risks and risks affecting AoC member satisfaction/retention.
Key Contacts	<i>As described in the following role description.</i>

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

1. Strategic leadership of member services and engagement

- Lead the development and delivery of a coherent, joined-up membership experience across AoC, ensuring consistency, quality and clarity in how members are supported, engaged and represented.
- Drive a proactive approach to understanding member needs, emerging issues and risks, using insight and data to shape services and engagement.
- Ensure members are well-informed, listened to and effectively represented through AoC's policy, public affairs, campaigns and partnership activity.
- Champion colleges by engaging with key stakeholders and representing colleges locally, regionally and nationally.
- Assist the Chief Executive and other senior colleagues with their college facing responsibility e.g. presenting to boards and strategic groups, engaging with colleges on specific issues, and dealing with membership concerns.

2. Regional leadership and stakeholder engagement

- Provide strategic leadership and direction to AoC's nine Area Directors and their regional teams in the delivery of our membership offer, fostering collaboration, place based working, shared standards and a strong collective identity.
- Position AoC as a credible and influential stakeholder within regions and sub-regional structures, including mayoral strategic authorities and devolved policy and funding environments.
- Work with Area Directors to deepen relationships with college principals, CEOs, chairs, governors and other stakeholders, ensuring AoC has "a seat at the table" and valued influence in regional decision-making.
- Support internal collaboration and join-up of policy and services including Ofsted inspection support, mental health, and devolution.

3. Membership retention and risk management

- Oversee strategies to strengthen member engagement and retention, including identifying and addressing risks where colleges are disengaged or considering leaving membership.
- Support activity to re-engage colleges that are not currently in membership where appropriate, including positive action to represent, celebrate and champion the impact of colleges.
- Use membership data and intelligence to spot trends, risks and opportunities across the sector.

4. Governance services

- Provide leadership and strategic direction for AoC's governance services to members, working closely with the team to support the development of governance capacity and capability across the sector.
- Lead our work with national groups – including National Chairs Council and Governance Professionals - in the formulation of policy, promotion of best practice in college governance and provision of support networks.
- Ensure governance services for college governors and chairs are aligned with AoC's wider membership offer and regional engagement model, ensuring members receive support and guidance on relevant policy, funding, law and best practice.

5. Communications and insight

- Oversee the effective use of communications and membership data to improve engagement, targeting and impact, and support desired changes in perceptions and behaviours where needed.

- Ensure accurate, centralised membership data is used to inform engagement strategies, communications planning and service development.
- Contribute to AoC's external briefings, blogs and other written communications.

6. Leadership and management

- Play an active part in AoC's Senior Leadership Team, contributing to organisational strategic planning, leadership and decision-making.
- Line management of direct reports , providing leadership to the member services team and overseeing management of performance, wellbeing, development and efficiency.
- Build strong internal relationships across AoC and support internal initiatives and culture, while remaining primarily outward-facing and member-focused

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The following details the essential criteria for the role and how these will be assessed/ measured during the recruitment process. Key: A = Application; I = Interview; T = Test

Experience

- Strategic leadership experience within a membership organisation, education, public policy, charity or comparable stakeholder-driven environment (A / I).
- Strong track record of engaging and influencing senior leaders, ideally including CEOs, principals, board members or equivalent (A / I).
- Ability to lead a dispersed team and drive consistency across multiple locations (I).
- Demonstrable experience of building effective stakeholder relationships and partnerships in complex policy or devolved environments and balancing the diverse interests that need to be satisfied (A / I).

Skills and attributes

- High credibility, gravitas and confidence operating at senior levels with excellent influencing, communication and relationship-building skills (I / T).
- Strong strategic thinker with the ability to translate insight into practical action in a rapidly changing landscape which requires agility and new ways of thinking (I / T).
- Data-literate, with the ability to use insight to inform decisions and engagement strategies (T).
- Committed to improving outcomes for further education colleges and their students (A / I).

- Passionate about inclusion and helping to develop a culture of belonging at AoC and with colleges for students from all backgrounds (I).
- Flexibility is essential, with travel forming a core part of the role along with the need for collaboration with colleagues in-person as well as remotely (A / I).

Working arrangements:

- This is a mobile-hybrid role involving frequent travel across England to engage with members, regional stakeholders and AoC teams.
- The role may be home-based or London-office-based, with a hybrid work approach blending working time between the office, remote working and travelling to in-person meetings/events throughout AoC's nine regions across England. The role requires at least monthly travel to the AoC's London office (WC1).
- AoC offers a flexible working environment for all staff in line with our flexible and hybrid working policy.

Acknowledgement

This job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of the work performance by employees within this post. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities and qualifications / experience required by employees assigned to the role. These may be subject to future amendments following appropriate consultation.



Until
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