

Summary of some of the key points on the role of an ETB member

Please see the full details under the Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards Circular 0002/2019, link below

Corporate governance comprises the systems and procedures by which organisations are directed and controlled. As with all state bodies, Education and Training Boards (ETBs) should serve the interests of the Government, the taxpayer, and all other stakeholders, and pursue value for money in their endeavours, including managing risk appropriately. ETBs should act prudently, ethically and with transparency as public entities and should conduct their activities consistent with their statutory responsibilities.

High standards of corporate governance in ETBs are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall economic efficiency, competitiveness, social cohesion and regional development.

The Board (being elected and appointed members of the ETB) and Management of the ETBs are accountable for the proper management of the organisation. Board members and employees of ETBs should be strongly guided by the principles set out in the Code.

Good governance in ETBs

- encourages better informed and longer term decision-making;
- encourages the efficient use of resources;
- strengthens accountability for the stewardship of resources;
- is characterised by robust scrutiny of relevant issues;
- places ongoing emphasis on improving public sector performance.

Good organisational tone can be set through policies, codes of ethics, the development and promotion of good internal controls along with effective governance. This involves a commitment by the Board and management to creating and exemplifying a culture of honesty and ethical behaviour which can be reinforced by an active oversight by those charged with governance.

In accordance with ETB legislation the functions of an ETB are defined as reserved (performed by the Board) and executive (performed by the Chief Executive, in accordance with the policies of the ETB, and who is accountable to the Board for the due performance of his/her functions).

Role of Board Members

Each ETB should be headed by an effective Board which is collectively responsible for the leadership of the Education and Training Board and no one individual should have unfettered powers of influence. Board members should bring an informed independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, resources and standards of conduct.

Fiduciary Duty: All Board members have a fiduciary duty to the ETB in the first instance (i.e. the duty to act in good faith and in the best interests of the ETB). The principle fiduciary duties are to:

- act in good faith in what the Board member considers to be the interest of the ETB;
- act honestly and responsibly in relation to the conduct of the affairs of the ETB;
- act in accordance with the ETB's purpose and exercise his or her powers only for the purposes allowed by law;
- not to benefit from or use the ETB's property, information or opportunities for his or her own or anyone else's benefit unless the ETB's procedures permits it;
- not to agree to restrict the Board member's power to exercise an independent judgement;
- avoid any conflict between the Board member's duties to the ETB and the Board member's other interests;
- exercise the care, skill and diligence which would be reasonably expected of a person in the same position with similar knowledge and experience as a Board member.

Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards 0002/2019:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0002_2019.pdf