

# Candidate Brief

## Principal and Chief Executive

### Burnley College

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August 2025



# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Principal and Chief Executive at Burnley College.

We are at a pivotal moment in our college's journey. We are seeking an exceptional leader to take on the role of Principal and Chief Executive: a visionary individual with the experience, integrity and commitment to lead through a period of transformation and renewal.

This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of a Further Education institution that is deeply rooted in its community and committed to delivering excellence, inclusion and opportunity for all. As we navigate change, we are looking for a leader who brings extensive experience and deep knowledge of the Further Education sector, with a proven track record of driving improvement, fostering innovation and delivering high-quality outcomes for learners.



Our next Principal and Chief Executive will be someone who is passionate about building futures and changing lives – a values-driven leader who places its learners, its communities and its people at the heart of every decision. You will be a strategic thinker and a visible, inspiring presence across the college, capable of galvanising staff, students and stakeholders around a shared vision for success.

In this role, integrity, assurance and compliance are paramount. You will be responsible for ensuring the highest standards of governance, financial stewardship and regulatory compliance, while also championing a culture of transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

We are seeking a leader who embodies the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, and who can demonstrate these values in every aspect of their leadership.

If you are ready to lead with purpose, inspire with passion and deliver with impact, we invite you to join us in shaping a bold and ambitious future for our college and the communities we serve.

Should you wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact John Dodd of Dodd Partners on 07545 431 848 or 01244 738 450. Alternatively, email: [johndodd@doddpartners.com](mailto: johndodd@doddpartners.com).

David Brown

Chair of the Governing Board  
Burnley College

# Burnley College

At Burnley College, we are passionate about the success of our students, and our staff are key to creating a culture of excellence. We aspire to be world-class and are nationally recognised for our specialisms.

Our mission at Burnley College is to 'Build Futures and Change Lives' through excellent education that raises aspirations and motivates our communities into employment that benefits them, as well as the economy. We achieve this through our Strategic Objectives, which are reviewed annually, and our Goals which Governors hold the college accountable to.

Burnley College is a large single campus General Further Education college (T/O £43m) located in Burnley and serving communities in Lancashire and its surrounding areas including Cumbria, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside.

The college recognises the significant role it plays in raising aspirations for, and ensuring success in, education and skills for a community where secondary educational attainment has significant challenges. There are two other further education colleges within 10 miles of the campus.

Burnley College has a strong commitment to positively building futures and changing lives through excellence in education and employment. To fulfil this promise, our curriculum is constantly evolving and tailored to address the latest labour market trends, providing learners with viable pathways to sustainable and meaningful employment. Our approach is collaborative and continuously reviewed, working closely with employers, local representative groups, local providers and other stakeholders.

We are proud to offer clear pathways, ranging from entry level to degree level, which are supported by our investment in individualised learner support, extra-curricular and "work ready" skills and pastoral care. Our approach is founded on continued investment in our staff, facilities and capabilities, allowing the college to serve changing markets and evolving priorities continuously.



The Governing Board is effective and works extremely well with the senior management team. The basis of the relationship is mutual respect and clarity about the respective functions of the Board and the management team. The membership of the Board is balanced and inclusive to reflect the nature of the college and the community in which it operates.

The college is also working closely with University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to align its university provision and ensure a cohesive offer for the Burnley areas. The aim is ultimately for Burnley College to primarily deliver Foundation Degrees in Burnley and for those students to progress to the UCLan Burnley Campus to top up to degree level.

## Strategic Objectives

- To develop mature and confident young people through excellent sixth form education with academic and vocational pathways.
- To significantly expand the local range of opportunities for university education while maintaining high standards.
- To make a significant contribution to the local and national economy through enhancing the personal growth, enterprise and employability of individuals.
- To maintain learning and teaching and all business support processes at an excellent standard.
- To promote a culture of excellence where all staff have high aspirations, positive morale and are able to grow and develop through their contributions to the college's success.
- To assure stable financial health, value for money and environmental sustainability.
- To maintain outstanding equality of opportunity.

## Burnley College, 2024 – 2027 Goals

In June 2024, the Governing Board agreed nine key college goals for 2024-27 as follows:

- To achieve an excellent achievement rate with high levels of both retention and pass rates.
- To ensure students achieve beyond their potential, evidenced by a value-added score of above +0.3.
- To evidence innovative learning and teaching excellence demonstrated through at least 90% of Deep Dives graded at Good or better, with high levels of learning visit outcomes.
- To achieve planned targets in respect of the major funding streams for University Education, Further Education, Commercial activities and projects.
- To foster strong relationships with the business community by building trust and mutual respect through impactful collaborative partnerships.
- To demonstrate an innovative utilisation of college assets and practices in order to maximise opportunities for the organisation through our people.
- To demonstrate high levels of staff engagement, morale and support whilst maintaining a safe and secure environment as a basis for outstanding performance.
- To achieve the college budget while demonstrating value for money and environmental sustainability.
- To demonstrate equality of opportunity in achieving the above goals.



# Mission, Vision and Values

## Mission

- **Building Futures and Changing Lives:** Burnley College aims to provide opportunities for individuals to improve their lives through education and training.
- **Raising Aspirations:** the college strives to motivate individuals to pursue their goals and reach their full potential.
- **Positive Impact on the Economy:** Burnley College seeks to contribute to the local and regional economy by preparing individuals for employment.

## Vision

- **Supportive Learning Community:** Burnley College fosters a positive and inclusive environment where students feel supported and encouraged to learn.
- **Celebration of Achievement:** the college recognises and celebrates the accomplishments of its learners.
- **Professional Development:** Burnley College aims to provide opportunities for staff to develop professionally.

## Values

- **Openness and Honesty:** transparency and integrity are fundamental to the college's interactions with students, staff and the wider community.
- **Fairness and Consistency:** the college ensures that all individuals are treated equitably and that policies and procedures are applied consistently.
- **Mutual Support:** a strong sense of community and collaboration is encouraged among students and staff.
- **Rigour:** Burnley College is committed to maintaining high academic standards.
- **Equality and Diversity:** the college values and promotes inclusivity and respect for all individuals, regardless of background.
- **Loyalty:** a commitment to the college and its community is fostered among students and staff.
- **Innovation and Achievement and Aspiration:** the college encourages creativity, innovation and a drive for excellence.



For more information, please visit: [www.burnley.ac.uk](http://www.burnley.ac.uk)

# Job Specification

**Job Title:** Principal and Chief Executive  
**Reports To:** Chair of the Governing Board

## Purpose

The Principal and Chief Executive will lead Burnley College to achieve its ambitious objectives, ensuring that the college works within regulatory frameworks to deliver high quality, innovative and inspiring education and skills that respond to local, regional and national priorities, whilst remaining financially robust.

The Principal and Chief Executive will protect Burnley College's mission, vision and values whilst enhancing and promoting its reputation locally, regionally and nationally.

## Key Responsibilities

- Provide inspiring and motivational leadership that will support and challenge a culture that meets and where appropriate exceeds the needs of all learners, partners and stakeholders.
- Work with the Governing Board to develop the college's strategic plans for the provision of educational services.
- Be a champion of excellence in teaching, learning and assessment, ensuring that high-quality standards are set and maintained for all curriculum provision.
- Lead the Senior Management team to develop strategy and implement operational business plans that are bold and innovative.
- Play a key role in the local/regional/national skills agenda with a particular emphasis on technical, vocational and professional education and training aligned to the needs of the regional economy and the wider inclusion agenda.
- As Accounting Officer, work with the Director of Finance and Resources to uphold financial probity and compliance so that the Burnley College is managed on a sound, prudent financial basis to ensure sustainability and breadth of service.
- Ensure Burnley College plays a contributory role in developing local social and economic development plans along with national and local government and employers.
- Engage, influence and develop productive and sustainable relationships with key external stakeholders (local, regional and national), including local/combined authorities, employers, employer-led bodies, government bodies and policy makers, education sector establishments, suppliers and delivery partners, funders and voluntary/third sector organisations, to further the successful outcomes of the college.
- Focus on ensuring the very best outcomes for both students and staff by overcoming barriers to learning.
- Lead on the development of commercial strategies to ensure that the college generates income to meet objectives and to invest in its long-term future to support the regional economy.
- Work with the senior management team to embed a culture of continuous quality and performance improvement across all areas of the college in line with the principles of the Ofsted framework.
- Continue to develop and ensure the delivery of the digital strategy for Burnley College to support and enhance the learning experience and other operational objectives.
- Provide all colleagues with a cohesive sense of purpose, particularly during periods of change, ensuring a collaborative and inspirational culture is embedded with parity across all levels of the organisation.
- Ensure that equality of opportunity is fully embedded in all aspects of the college's operations.
- Embrace and fulfil the values within the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles).
- Be a member of the Board and play a full and active role in its work and that of its committees.
- Ensure that Burnley College meets all of its statutory and regulatory obligations.

# Person Specification

## Qualifications

Degree level qualification with evidence of, and a commitment to, ongoing self-development and training to include a recognised teaching qualification.

## Essential Experience

- Strong and inspirational leadership and senior management experience in a Further Education-based organisation of relevant size, scope and complexity.
- A strong track record of leading and managing change successfully, with demonstrable improvements in service delivery and operational effectiveness whilst managing risk and driving quality improvement philosophy.
- Proven experience of taking a strategic perspective and providing a clear vision to deliver successful and sustainable outcomes in an education business whilst maximising and embracing new opportunities of relevance to support the regional economy.
- Have a proven ability to oversee and guide curriculum innovation, risk management and quality improvement across 14-19, adult, university and employer-facing provisions.
- Successful track record of strong financial management and business acumen with the proven ability to develop financial strategies that deliver sustainable profit/surplus and offset risk.
- Proven experience of working through others to ensure plans are delivered successfully and risks are managed effectively.
- Demonstrable experience of working with a Governing Body and a working knowledge of funding bodies.
- Profound knowledge of Learning, Teaching and Assessment whilst driving quality improvement strategies within the context of Further Education.
- Strong commercial skills to identify and prioritise opportunities to ensure growth whilst remaining inclusive and supportive of the diverse community the college serves.
- Experience of successfully managing a range of key stakeholders from employer-partners, funding bodies, local authorities and academic organisations, with political insight and sensitivity to protect and enhance the reputation of Burnley College.
- Proven experience of conceiving and delivering digital and capital development strategies that are aligned to an overarching business vision.
- Demonstrable success of inspiring, motivating and developing a senior team to improve organisational performance and produce consistently outstanding results, set against a changing educational context.

## Personal Qualities & Skills

- A willingness to embrace and promote the distinctive ethos of Burnley College.
- A full acceptance of responsibility and personal accountability.
- A demonstrable commitment to continuous self-development and updating.
- Effective people leadership based on the principles of respect and participation.
- Respect for the essential role of the Governing Board and commitment to supporting the Board.
- Business acumen applied to a college context.
- Commitment to achieving and sustaining the highest standards in the college's education programmes and in all other operations.
- Excellent communication skills.

## College Requirements

- Commitment to the college's Single Equality Policy.
- The College is committed to thorough and effective safeguarding of its learners and people, and expects everyone to share in the responsibility of meeting that commitment.
- Fiduciary duties require senior managers to put the interests of the college before their own and as part of this, they must disclose any wrongdoing they are aware of, including their own, such as using company time or resources to further personal business or directorships, at any time, during their employment.

### Qualities Aligning with Those of the Nolan Principles:

Selflessness	Integrity	Objectivity	Accountability
Openness	Honesty	Leadership	

## Terms

### Remuneration

The remuneration for this post is circa £170,000.

### Annual Holidays

The annual leave entitlement is 30 days per annum, plus recognised public holidays and in excess of six efficiency days per year.

### Pension Scheme

The holder of this post will have access to an LGPS or Teachers Pension Scheme.

### Relocation Allowance

This will be in line with current HMRC allowance rates

### Checks

This appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment references, medical checks and DBS clearance.

## Timeline

The following timeline is indicative and should only be used as a guide. This may be subject to change.

Process	Date
Close for Applications	9:00 am Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2025
Interviews with Dodd Partners	w/c 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Shortlist Meeting	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2025
Interviews with Burnley College	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2025

## How to Apply

Dodd Partners is undertaking the recruitment process on behalf of Burnley College. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following:

- A covering letter highlighting your suitability and how you meet the **Essential Experience** criteria detailed within the Person Specification, along with your current remuneration details.
- A comprehensive CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- All applications should be emailed to Dodd Partners at your earliest convenience and no later than 9 am Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 to [contactus@doddpartners.com](mailto:contactus@doddpartners.com), clearly marked with reference number DP3141.

Should you wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact John Dodd on 07545 431 848 or 01244 738 450. Alternatively, email: [johndodd@doddpartners.com](mailto: johndodd@doddpartners.com)