



POSITION PROFILE



Principal and  
Chief Executive



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Thank you for your interest in the opportunity to become Ayrshire College's new Principal and Chief Executive.

The role provides a great opportunity to make a difference to the lives of our students, our community, to Ayrshire's economy and to Scotland. Over the last nine years, the collective talent and commitment of our students, staff and partners has enabled us to be a highly successful and inclusive college which is reflected in our performance and student outcomes.

This is an exciting and dynamic strategic role, and applications are now invited from inspirational leaders who can deliver transformation to drive forward our future ambitions.

Your leadership and clear direction will enable a highly innovative and exciting place of learning where individuals can excel and achieve their full potential, a place where businesses and communities can access skills, expertise and creativity that supports local and national economic development and inclusive growth. You will embody our values of being respectful, supportive, and open and honest and ensure constant focus on putting students at the centre of everything we do.

As our new Principal you will have the support of an outstanding staff team and a fully committed Board of Management. We have also invested significantly in our college estate, and continue to do so, to provide flexible, state of the art facilities in which to learn and work and ensure access to the best resources and technology, to enable skills development and innovation.

This is a very exciting time to join our College and lead us towards our future vision. Please take the opportunity to review our information resources and explore the life and work of the College and our culture in more detail. I hope you will be inspired to apply for this role.



Willie Mackie  
Chair, Board of Management



Ayrshire College is one of the largest colleges in Scotland, formed in 2013 from the merger of the former Ayr and Kilmarnock Colleges and the Ayrshire campuses of the former James Watt College. The College has circa 900 (headcount) staff who work across three large campuses in the towns of Ayr, Kilmarnock and Kilwinning supporting 13,000 students and with an associated activity target of circa 125,000 credits. A new 'Future Skills Hub' in Kilwinning is planned to open in 2023. The College serves a population of 370,000 people and provides more than 700 courses to a student population made up of 11% under 16s, 45% 16- 17s, 18% 20-24s and 26% over 25s.

Partnership and collaboration are at the heart of what we do. The College recognises its unique position as a regional college and the responsibility it has to the communities across Ayrshire. Working with our community and business partners, the College is focused on improving employability, supporting economic development and widening access to education, skills and training. The College works with universities, employers, other providers and partners to ensure our students have the highest level of knowledge, skills and attributes to succeed. This includes identifying where we can transform how we do things and improving the outcomes for our students, creating new capacity and expertise, or making better use of our resources.



As outlined in the College's Statement of Ambition 2030, the three key strategic objectives are:

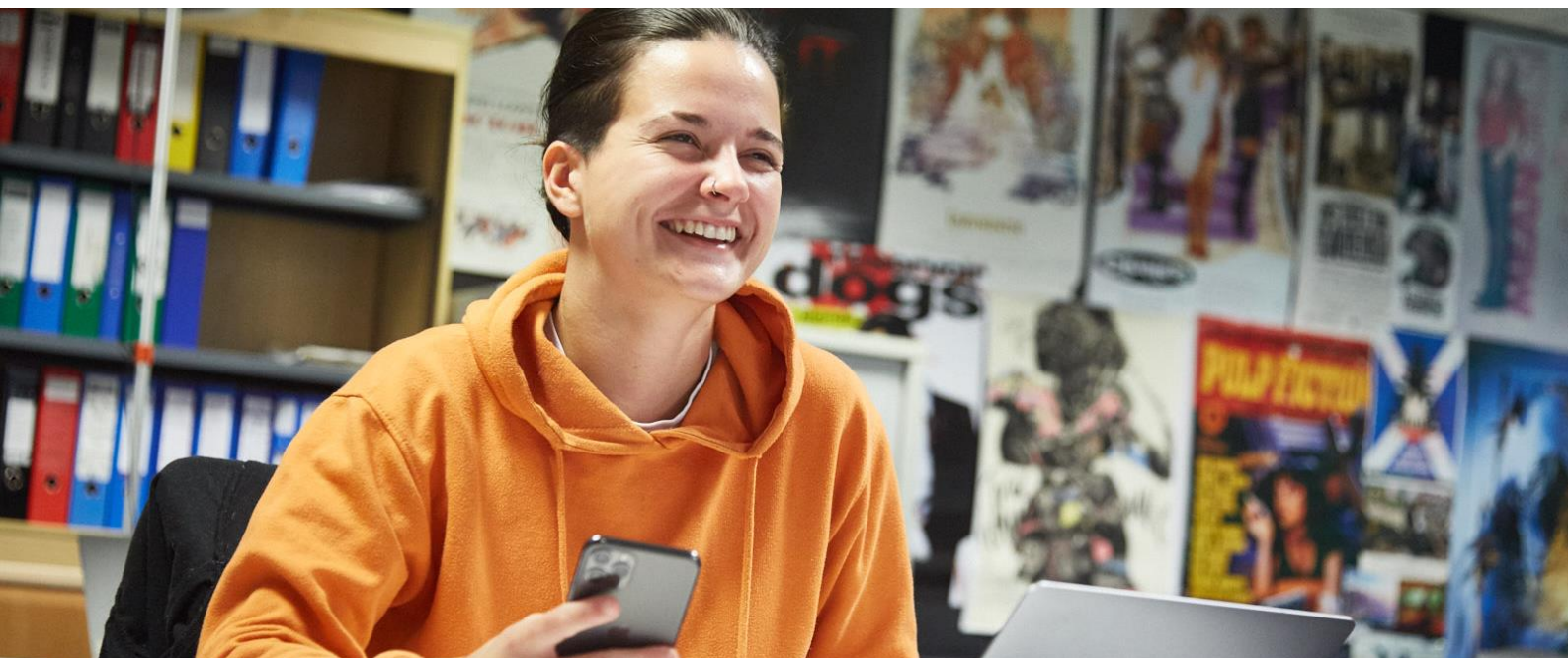
- To be an accessible, inspirational and inclusive place to work and learn
- To support, empower and inspire our staff and students
- To be a high performing, environmentally responsible college recognised for excellence, equality and integrity



Reflecting these current strategic objectives, the College aims to:

- Provide an inspirational college experience which supports and enables students to overcome the disruption to learning caused by the pandemic and to successfully progress on their learning journey
- Embed diversity and inclusion in all decisions, and support staff and students by providing accessible opportunities to learn, work and develop
- Embed a culture of open leadership and empowerment where staff and students feel valued, their voices are heard, and they are involved in decisions that affect them
- Work with partners, including businesses, to co-create and deliver a portfolio of learning and skills that is relevant, dynamic, flexible, and responsive to employer and industry needs, to current and future skills requirements and contributes to social and economic recovery
- Focus on being a high-performing college underpinned by excellence in stewardship, effective risk management and the highest standards of corporate governance
- Respond to the climate change emergency by being environmentally responsible, embedding sustainability in our learning and teaching and business opportunities
- Develop and support staff and students to work and learn in new and innovative ways to enable excellence in all aspects of learning and teaching and service delivery

The College supports students to develop and progress at whatever stage they are at in their lives with blended learning and work-based learning opportunities as well as alternatives to full-time study. As we begin to emerge from the pandemic, there will be a significant increase in demand for upskilling, reskilling, and retraining and the College will need to ensure that our curriculum, including our short course provision, aligns to regional skills demands and employment opportunities. As a partner in the Ayrshire Growth Deal, we will be able to gain insight into these skills demands.

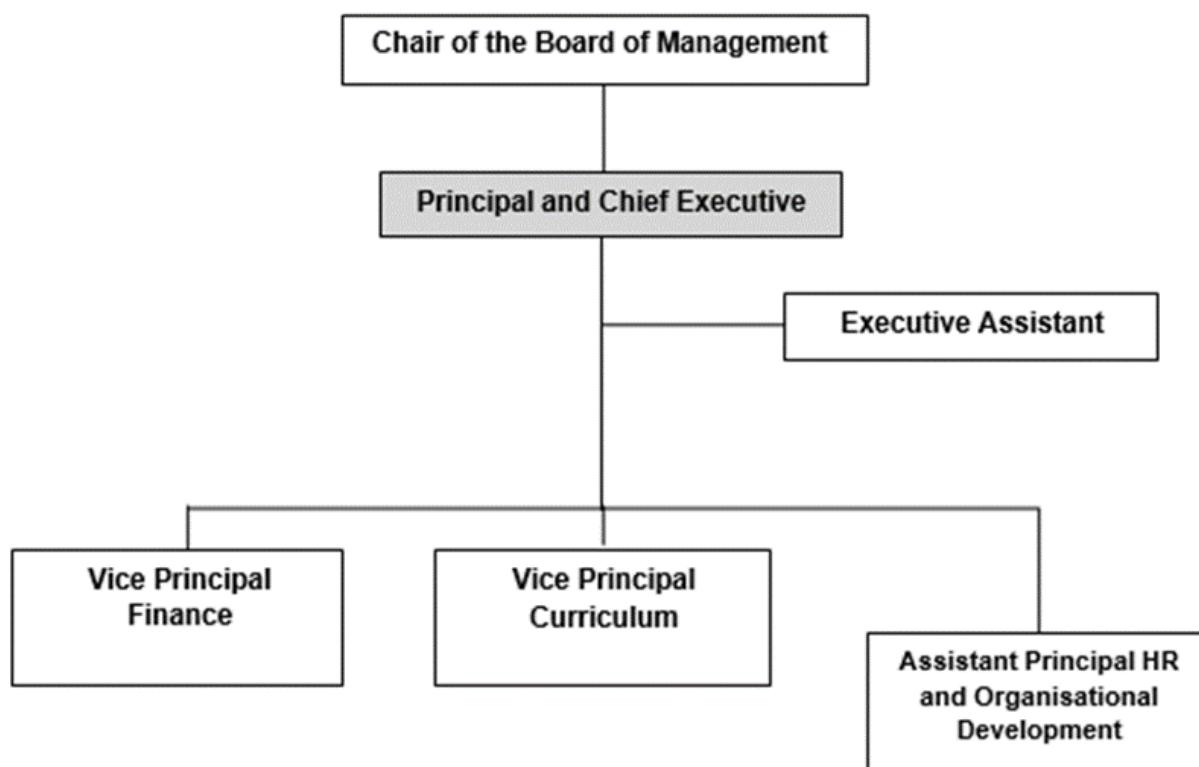






As Principal and Chief Executive, you will lead a vibrant and dynamic College which inspires students and staff to be successful, delivers outstanding performance and is regarded highly by stakeholders, employers and the wider community.

Providing inspirational leadership in a complex and multi-faceted regional environment you will ensure the delivery of national imperatives and enable the College to deliver against our key strategic and operational aims whilst also supporting employers, partners and communities to move forward positively during the post-pandemic period and beyond.



## Key priorities for the role include:

- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with a diverse range of external stakeholders and partners (including Local Authorities, Community Planning Partnerships and both local and national politicians), ensuring the College continues to be viewed as a dynamic and critical strategic partner that directly contributes to the sustainable economic transformation of the region
- Ensuring the highest standards of delivery for all learning, teaching and support services using digital and technological innovation, where appropriate
- Leading the College through participation, engagement and inclusion to enable the highest standards of corporate management and governance and ensure the security, integrity and sustainability of the organisation
- Working with and influencing key stakeholders for the benefit of the College, its communities and supporting the wider aims and policy directions across the sector, represented by, for example, the Scottish Funding Council, Education Scotland and Colleges Scotland



- Continuing the development of a culture focused on delivering the highest standards of learning and teaching, underpinned by the core values of respectful, open and honest, and supportive
- Acting as an outstanding ambassador for the College, ensuring the organisation's reputation is safeguarded, and its interests are effectively represented

## Main Duties and Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership

- Lead the College through a participative, inclusive and engaging approach, to support the Chair and Board of Management to deliver the 2030 Statement of Ambition and strategic objectives
- Working with the Chair, represent the College across a range of sector projects facilitated by Colleges Scotland and the Employers' Association, to influence national direction and achieve the best possible outcomes for the Sector and the College
- Through dynamic leadership, ensure the College has a constant focus on widening access to the highest quality of learning, teaching and skills development opportunities which meet the needs of students, employers, partners and stakeholders
- Build and enable highly effective strategic relationships and alliances, enhancing partnership and stakeholder working to support the delivery of the Ayrshire Growth deal and other key regional strategies
- Lead and enable a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across all aspects of the College's performance, ensuring a clear focus on the efficient and effective achievement of the most successful outcomes for students, communities and stakeholders
- Promote an entrepreneurial and dynamic culture across the College which enables staff to respond to opportunities, influence policy making and contribute at the forefront of innovations within key industry sectors
- Inspire continuing organisational development to engage, motivate and empower staff to put forward ideas and adapt to complex and changing circumstances across the sector, underpinned by the College's core values

### Governance and Management

- Provide leadership to ensure robust governance arrangements in all aspects of the College's business, to enable efficient and effective management within the guidelines laid down by the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council, to maintain full compliance with legal, statutory and regulatory requirements
- Effectively discharge the ex-officio role of the Principal as a member of the Board of Management, establishing and maintaining participative and effective working relationships with all Board Members, implementing Board decisions, and ensuring sound monitoring and reporting of all key matters which could impact on the College's reputation, governance arrangements and strategic aims
- Lead the continuing development of highly effective relationships and alliances with key stakeholders, partners and the College's communities, including the Scottish Government, the



Scottish Funding Council, the three local authority areas, public sector agencies, the private sector and not-for-profit organisations, to enable the integration of strategic aims and ambitions

- Provide leadership to ensure that the College develops its Regional Outcome Agreement and Enhancement plan, in line with the requirements of the Scottish Funding Council and Education Scotland
- Lead a culture which champions the development of the highest quality of participative, engaging and inclusive leadership across the organisation, always aligned to the College's values
- Provide leadership to ensure that effective systems operate throughout the College to support the efficient management of financial resources, performance, risk, health, safety and wellbeing, data protection, business continuity, safeguarding and all aspects of necessary and required legislation and compliance







## **Learning, Teaching and Student Experience**

- Promote a culture of continuous quality improvement and enhancement in the delivery of a curriculum that is innovative, inspiring and digitally enabled which prepares students to achieve and progress, based on the business, economic and social needs of the Ayrshire region, during the immediate post-pandemic period and beyond
- Provide leadership to ensure the highest-quality student experience is delivered and the student voice is heard across the College through strong engagement and close working relationships with the Ayrshire College Student Association (ACSA)
- Provide leadership to ensure that the College has a culture that empowers students to be active participants in their learning and encourages meaningful student feedback to support quality improvement and enhancement
- Provide leadership to ensure that, in line with Education Scotland requirements, the learning, pastoral and social environment for all students aims to be sector leading and of the highest possible standard

## **People and Culture**

- Enable a participative style of leadership across the College, to ensure the effective management and development of the workforce, taking account of the key strategic objectives set out within the 2030 Statement of Ambition
- Lead and promote a culture across the whole organisation to motivate, engage, reward and inspire all members of staff to deliver their highest level of performance and to provide an overall working environment in which they will participate effectively, thrive and develop
- Enable local employee relations to continue to be fostered effectively through arrangements for discussion, consultation and negotiation with trade union representatives in respect of matters currently out-with the scope of National Bargaining frameworks

## **Partnerships and External Relationships**

- Work effectively and positively with the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council, sector leaders and other stakeholders to shape and influence local, regional and national policy development
- Position the College, through inspirational leadership, to develop key strategic alliances with business partners to support programmes of development within the Ayrshire Growth Deal and enable the sustainable transformation of the region
- Lead the development of dynamic relationships with employers and industry partners, enabling the College to respond quickly to the changing needs of employers and the wider economy of Ayrshire during the post-pandemic recovery period and beyond
- Provide leadership for the development of community relationships across Ayrshire, establishing the College as a critical asset, providing high quality learning and skills provision and embedding its position appropriately and visibly



As an engaging and visionary leader, candidates will have relevant experience of educational leadership coupled with a demonstrated track record of achievement in senior leadership roles. The ability to embrace and recognise creativity and innovation to develop business opportunities and deliver transformational change are also key requirements.

The successful candidate will also be a highly skilled communicator and negotiator with the ability to achieve successful outcomes and build excellent relationships and partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders to shape and influence the strategic agenda at both a local and national level.

## Education and Professional Qualifications:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- PgD/MSc level academic or professional management qualification or membership of a professional association
- Evidence of Continuing Professional Development

## Skills and Experience:

- Direct involvement in developing and implementing organisational strategy, successfully leading change and innovation and delivering excellent outcomes
- The ability to translate a vision into strategic priorities, lead people in the efficient and effective management of resources, to achieve key strategic objectives within an environment of change and competing priorities
- Strong leadership and people management skills with the ability to motivate staff and develop and maintain effective internal working relationships with staff and trade unions and externally with key partners and stakeholders
- Extensive experience of building and developing effective stakeholder networks
- Strong financial acumen and the ability and know how to control finances and budgets in a challenging environment of efficiency savings
- A successful track record in risk management, governance and compliance
- Direct involvement in successfully driving change initiatives from inception through to conclusion
- The ability to critically evaluate and implement opportunities to develop and expand the range of provision and resources available to learners and stakeholders
- Experience of leading complex tasks and projects through to a successful conclusion within timescales set
- The ability to embrace and recognise creativity and innovation to develop business opportunities
- Relevant experience leading a culture of continuous improvement
- Demonstrable knowledge or the ability to quickly gain an understanding of:
  - Scottish Government Education policy and the policies and strategic direction of other appropriate agencies



- Scottish Funding Council strategic approach, policy matters and funding methodology
- Current developments in the FE/HE sector in Scotland
- Governance arrangements in relation to FE/HE in Scotland, including policy developments and funding arrangements
- Complex issues facing a multi-site business

## Personal Attributes:

- A highly skilled negotiator with a record of achieving successful outcomes and building excellent relationships and partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders
- Strong ambassadorial and presentation skills with the ability to express views convincingly and coherently using a variety of media
- Intellectual flexibility to move easily between significant detail and the bigger picture
- High degree of personal integrity
- Strong self-awareness, confidence and political acumen
- Significant personal drive and resilience
- Embody the College's values – respectful, supportive, open and honest – in all aspects of leadership and day-to-day interaction







Easy to reach and even easier to explore, Ayrshire sits on the west coast of Scotland, only a 40-minute drive from Glasgow, and features the wonders of countryside towns and sandy shores. Its principal towns include Ayr, Kilmarnock and Irvine and it borders the counties of Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire to the north-east, Dumfriesshire to the south-east, and Kirkcudbrightshire and Wigtownshire to the south. Like many other counties of Scotland, it currently has no overall administrative centre, instead being sub-divided into the council areas of North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and East Ayrshire. The region has a population of approximately 366,800.

A number of railway lines connect the towns of Ayrshire to each other and also to Glasgow, as well as south to Stranraer and south-east to Dumfries. Ferries link Ayrshire to the islands of Arran and Great Cumbrae in Buteshire. Glasgow Prestwick International Airport, serving Glasgow and the west of Scotland more generally, is located 32 miles (51 km) away from Glasgow in Ayrshire.

Places of interest in Ayrshire include Auchendarvie Castle, Culzean Castle and Country Park and Burns National Heritage Park.





The role offers a salary range of £136,867 to £147,067, with an annual leave entitlement of 31 days' leave and 18 fixed and public holidays.

The successful candidate will also be able to join one of the following two pensions Schemes offered by the College and which includes generous employer contributions:

1. – Local Government Pension Scheme - Strathclyde Pensions Fund
2. – Scottish Public Pensions Agency – Scottish Teacher's Pensions Scheme

A relocation package may be available to the successful candidate depending on circumstances

The College provides extensive staff wellbeing support including access to Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme. The College has also recently introduced a Hybrid Working pilot programme for all staff.

Interested candidates should provide a tailored CV and supporting covering letter (max. 1000 words), outlining your suitability and motivation for applying to [douglasadam@livingstonjames.com](mailto:douglasadam@livingstonjames.com). You will also be asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

## Recruitment Timetable

<b>Closing date for applications:</b>	Monday 14th March
<b>Shortlist meeting (Livingston James &amp; Ayrshire College):</b>	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Formal Panel Assessment:</b>	TBC (21 <sup>st</sup> or 29 <sup>th</sup> April)

*Ayrshire College is an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.*