

## Governance Remuneration and Search Committee Annual Report 2024/25

### 1. Introduction

This report covers the academic year 2024/25 of East Coast College's Governance Remuneration and Search Committee.

East Coast College's Corporation adopted AOC's [Further Education Code of Good Governance](#) in October 2024, and this sees Annual Reports as recommended practice and a source of assurance.

The Corporation's Committee Annual Reports are published for transparency alongside the Committee's non-confidential minutes on the College's [website](#).

The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee's objective, outlined in its terms of reference, is 'To help ensure Good Governance'.

The Committee's purposes in its Terms of Reference are divided into three key areas: Search, Governance, and Remuneration, and include the scheme of delegation. These Terms of Reference are included in the Corporation's Standing Orders on the College's [website](#).

### 2. Committee Membership

The membership of the Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee includes the Corporation Chair, Vice Chairs, and the Chairs of the other Standing Committees, except the Audit Committee Chair, to preserve the independence of that Committee.

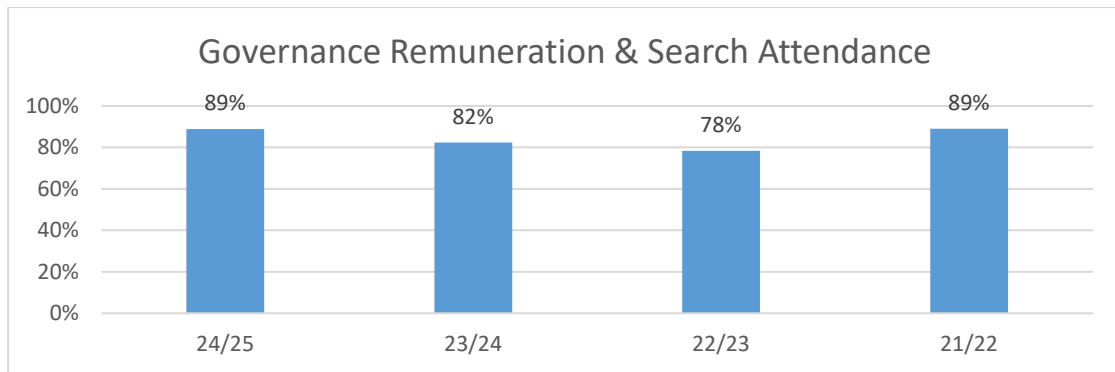
The Committee was Chaired in 2024/25 by Kirk Lower, Vice Chair, and was clerked by the Director of Governance, Wendy Stanger. Meetings have been a mix of virtual and on-site.

**Table 1: Committee membership and attendance in 2024/25**

<b>Governor</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
David Blake (Corporation Chair)	<b>2/4</b>
Tina Ellis (Vice Chair)	<b>4/4</b>
Kirk Lower (Vice Chair and Governance Remuneration & Search Chair)	<b>4/4</b>
Ian Lomax (Finance & General Purposes Chair)	<b>4/4</b>
Peter Lavender (Quality & Curriculum Chair)	<b>4/4</b>
Jude Owens (People Chair until 31/12/24)	<b>2/2</b>
Rachael Botley (People Chair from 20/5/25)	<b>1/1</b>
Paul Padda (Principal and CEO)	<b>3/4</b>

This gives an overall attendance of 89%, which is an improvement on the previous year and is above the corporation's target of 80%.

**Table 2: Governance Remuneration and Search Attendance Review**



The Committee met on four occasions during the year. Additional meetings were held specifically for Governor recruitment; these have not been included in the attendance review, as they were not scheduled for all Committee members.

### 3. Governor Recruitment and Succession Planning

The Committee oversees governor recruitment and succession planning and makes recommendations to the Board for appointment. During 2024/25, four Independent Governors, two Associate Governors, and two Student Governors commenced their terms of office.

All governor appointments are aligned with the College's academic year and are for a term of between one and four years.

Recruitment aimed to enhance the Board's diversity and strengthen its overall skills mix. The gender and age mix of the Board has improved, but there is a need to improve its overall diversity, and recruitment is ongoing with adverts on the College's [website](#) and on [Reach Volunteering](#).

As of September 2025, the Board's composition demonstrates a healthy balance of continuity and renewal, with a well-distributed range of governor term end dates.

**Table 3: Governor Length of Office**

Less than 1 year	1 - 4 years	5 - 8 years	9 - 12 years	Over 12 years
5	5	4	0	0
36%	36%	29%	0%	0%

**Table 4: Governor Term End Dates**

	Independent	Staff	Students
<b>2025</b>	1		0
<b>2026</b>	5	2	
<b>2027</b>	3		
<b>2028</b>	5		
<b>2029</b>	3		

## 4. Training and Development

The Committee has overseen and monitored the Governor's training and development. Training has been from varying sources, both internal and external.

**37 Governance Updates, online training completed, & Over 60 training and development sessions attended, including:**



**Senior Team Inductions**

**Safeguarding & Prevent**

**Smartlog Online Training**

**Governance Updates x 37**

**Ofsted Briefing**

**Sexual Harassment**

**Resources Section**



**ECC Student Leadership Academy**

**ECC Student Conference**

**Student Governor Changemaker Programme**

EVERSHEDS  
SUTHERLAND

**Sexual Harassment Twilight**



Department  
for Education

**Prevent in Education: Training for Governors and Trustees**



**Chairs Council**

**Networks**

- Chair & Vice Chair
- Finance & Audit Committee
- Curriculum and Quality Chairs
- Staff Governor
- EDI
- SEND

**Governance Conferences & Training**

- Staff Governors
- Effective board behaviours
- Leading a Committee
- Effective Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Understanding sector, policy and inspection
- Culture, people and organisational development
- Safeguarding Trauma Informed Practises
- Understanding Your Role as Safeguarding Lead

**Governance Development Programme**

**Governors Induction**

**Audit Master Classes**

The Director of Governance is a Chartered Governance Professional and a Fellow of the Chartered Governance Institute. In 2024/25, they were awarded the Level 7 Diploma for Further Education Governance Professionals (Dip FEGP). Throughout the year, they engaged in a range of relevant training and development activities, including attendance at the AoC Annual Conference, FEC Conferences, AoC Regional and National Network meetings, and various governance webinars. In addition to their own development, they also contributed to sector-wide improvement by delivering training and development sessions for others.

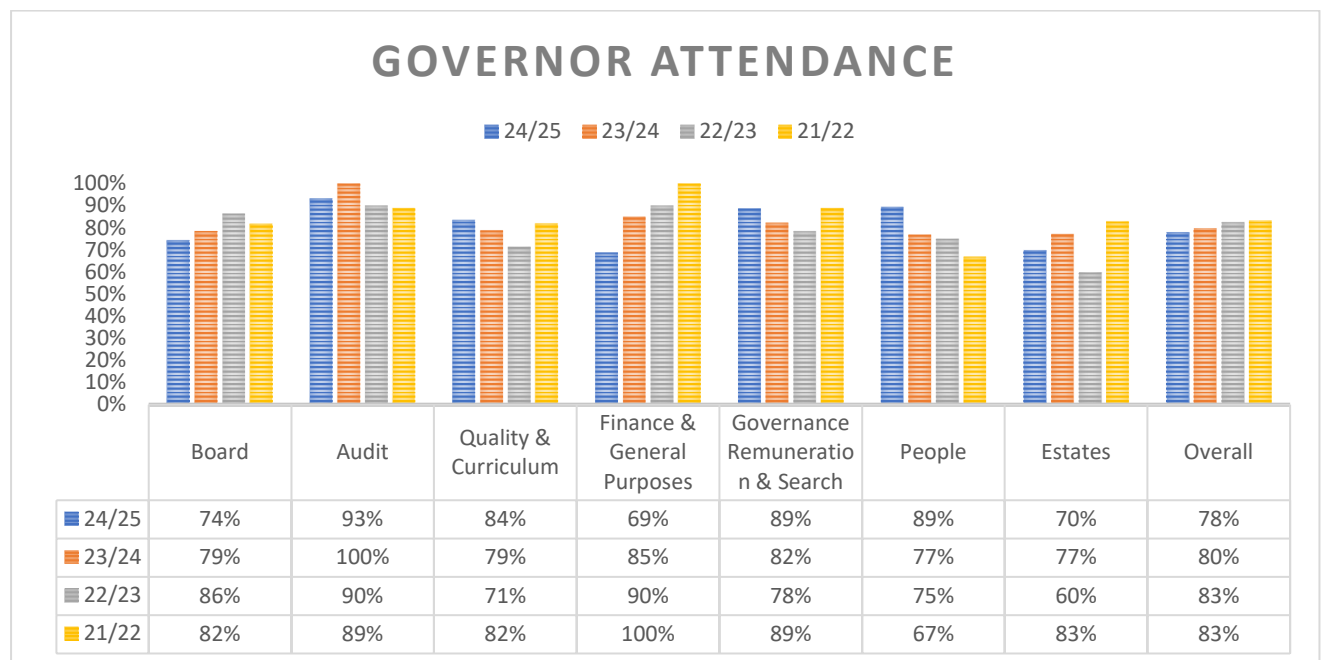
### 5. Attendance and Engagement

The Committee oversees and monitors governors' attendance and engagement, and takes appropriate action where necessary.

The Committee recognises that attendance is an area for further development, as attendance has reduced, with attendance overall at 78% for all governors and 85% for Independent Governors.

A number of those governors with poor attendance are no longer on the Board, and others have had their commitment reduced for 2025/26.

**Table 4: Governor Attendance**



This is below the sector and identified as an area for further improvement:

**2024/2025**

Mean average attendance rate of 91 colleges – 81.82%

Range of attendance rates: lowest - 71%; highest – 94%

**2023/2024**

Mean average attendance rate of 82 colleges – 82.19%

Range of attendance rates: lowest - 67%; highest – 97%

### **2022/2023**

Mean average attendance rate of 101 colleges – 82.68%

Range of attendance rates: lowest - 69%; highest – 94%

### **2021/2022**

Mean average attendance rate of 102 colleges – 82.49%

Range of attendance rates: lowest - 63%; highest – 96.5%

The Committee also reviews the Governor's engagement.

- During 2024/25, over 70 Governor visits took place, including participation in SAR reviews, walkthroughs, and celebration events and the Governor Link Scheme was relaunched.
- Engagement remains a key focus for the Committee, which is committed to further developing and strengthening Governor involvement across the College.

## **6. Senior Post Holders**

The Corporation has in place a Senior Post Holder Remuneration and Appraisal Policy, and a revised version was adopted in December 2024. This aligns with the principles set out in the Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code. This policy also pays due regard to the Senior Pay Controls for Colleges introduced following the sector's reclassification, as well as the obligations arising from the College's status as a central government body.

The Corporation's Senior Post Holder Remuneration and Appraisal Policy December 2024 states that:

*Remuneration review recommendations will be based on the AOC's sector median for all colleges. Any proposal outside this median be it below or above or utilising any other benchmarking data to set remuneration will need to be justified in detail in the report for the Board to determine.*

And this has been used as a basis of decision making.

The College's senior post holders, who are those appointed by the Corporation, are:

- Principal and Chief Executive
- Deputy Chief Executive
- Deputy Principals and
- Director of Governance.

During the 2024/25 period, the Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee considered matters relating to Senior Post Holders at each of its meetings. Including remuneration, appraisals, 360 Reviews, and a revised policy.

Details of remuneration are included in the Senior Post Holder Remuneration Report 2024/25, which is adopted by the Corporation as part of its sign-off of the annual accounts and for transparency, published on the College's [website](#).

## 7. Risk Management


The Committee received the Tactical risk register relating to its role and reviewed it in line with the Audit Committee's set questions. These are:

1. Has the risk register been reviewed?
2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated?
3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated?
4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken?
5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns?

The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee's risks managed in the Tactical Risk Register in 2024/25 were:

- Finance and General Purposes Committee's failure to sufficiently challenge and monitor the College's income and expenditure.
- Quality and Curriculum Committee's failure to sufficiently challenge and monitor the College's teaching & learning activity, student retention, achievement, attendance, destination and value added.  
Quality and Curriculum Committee's failure to sufficiently challenge and monitor the College's strategic curriculum development and curriculum plan.
- A senior team which do not benefit from effective wellbeing support.
- Failure to recruit, develop and retain high-quality governors.
- Non-compliance with sector governance regulatory and compliance requirements.
- People Committee and Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee's failure to sufficiently challenge and monitor the College's people and wellbeing activities.
- Individuals make fraudulent claims regarding eligibility to become or remain a governor or Senior Post Holder in their application and/or on their declaration of eligibility.
- Failure to recruit, develop and retain a high-quality senior team.
- Ineffective governance.

**Table 5: Governance Remuneration and Search Risk Register Summary**

 Last Reviewed June 2025	Post Mitigation Risk Rating			Risk Appetite		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
	6	1	2	9	0	0
	Variance From Risk Appetite			Change in Variance from Risk Appetite		
Low	Medium	High	Down	Unchanged	Up	
5	4	0	1	8	0	

## 8. Governance Self-Assessment and External Board Review

The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee assesses its performance as part of the annual self-assessment and oversees the Corporation's Self-Assessment.

In line with the Accountability Agreement, an external governance review must be carried out every 3 years, framed around the key principles of the Corporation's governance code. An External Board Review was carried out in 2023/24 by the AOC, which was reported to the Committee and the Board, and a summary was published on the [website](#).

During 2024/25, the Committee has revised the self-assessment questionnaires to align them with its governance code, and the overall conclusion was that the Corporation's governance was good. This was also informed by the [2024 Ofsted Inspection](#), which concluded that the College was Good in all areas and stated:

**Ofsted 2024 - Governors work highly effectively with leaders to make a positive contribution to the strategic direction of the college. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the quality of education. Governors provide effective challenge to leaders.**

### Self-Assessment

The ECC Governance Remuneration and Search Committee assesses its performance as part of the College's annual self-assessment, which is overseen by the Committee, and an External Board Review took place in 2023/24. Areas for improvement are included in the Governance Improvement Plan.

The self-assessment questionnaire was completed by seven governors who agreed that the Committee had met its terms of reference and remit in 2024/25.

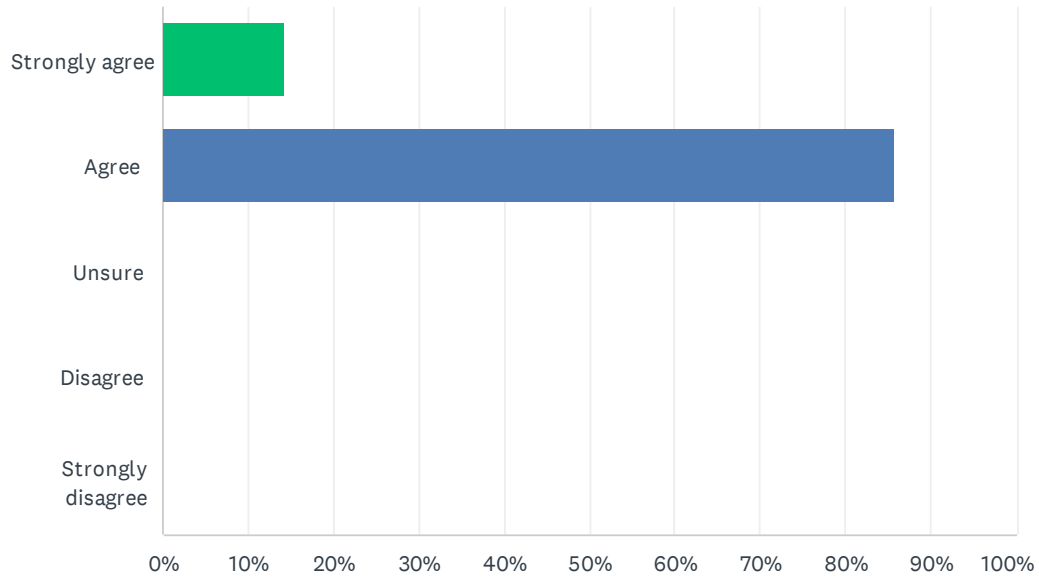
Areas for Development to be Reviewed by the Committee in 2025/26:

- Enhancing Governance Focus: Refocus the Committee's activities to strengthen its role in promoting and embedding good governance.
- Succession and Recruitment: Continue to develop and implement a robust succession planning strategy to ensure continuity of leadership and governance expertise. This should include a focus on diversifying Board membership and strengthening engagement with student governors.
- Attendance and Engagement: Monitor and improve governor attendance and active engagement to support effective governance.

Appendix 1 – Governance Remuneration and Search Committee's self-assessment.

## Q2 The Governance Remuneration and Search committee's terms of reference are fit for purpose

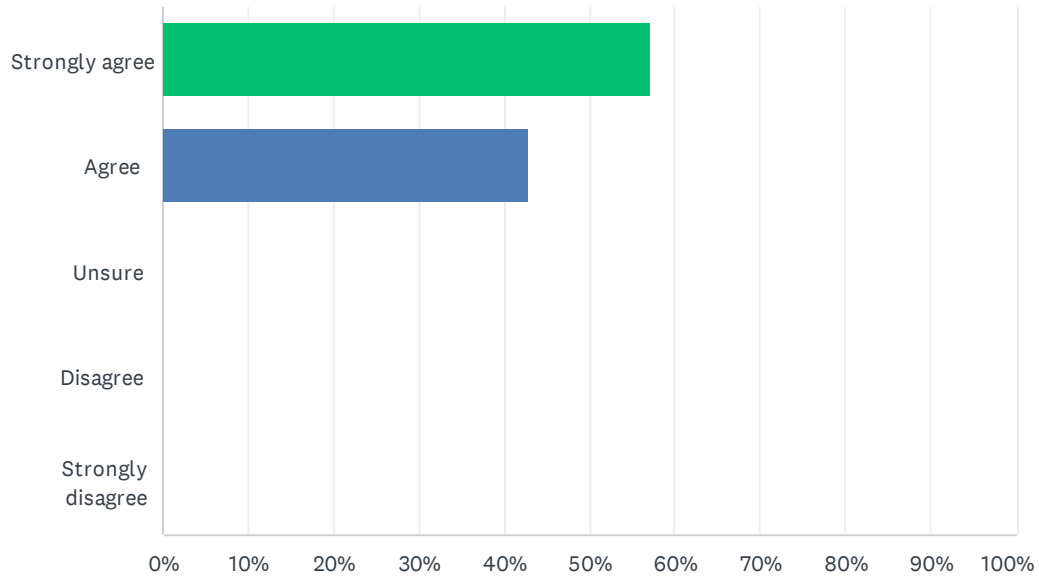
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	14.29%	1
Agree	85.71%	6
Unsure	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

### Q3 The committee provides strategic oversight of the college's Governance, Search and Senior Post Holder Remuneration

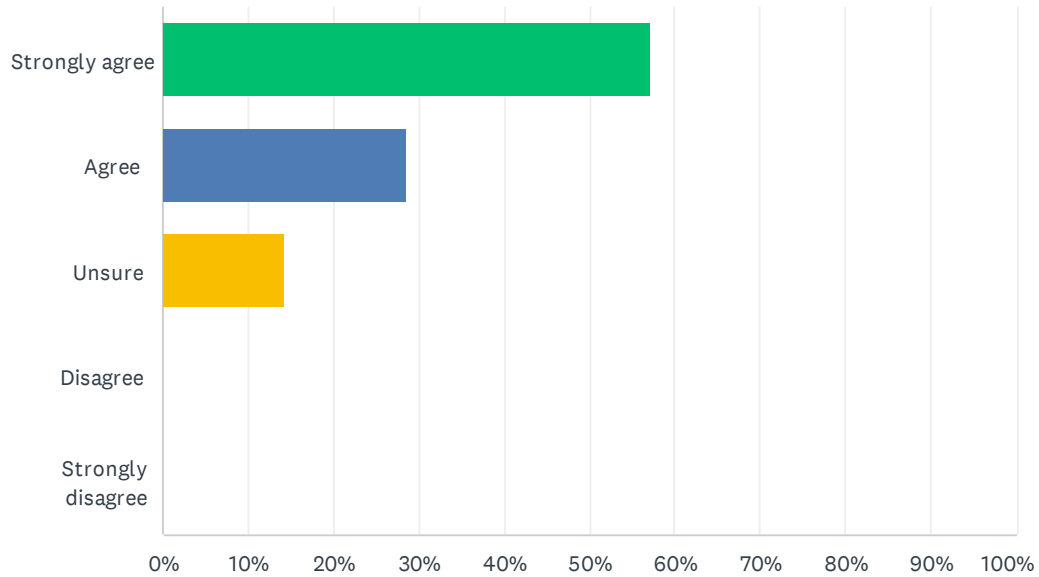
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	57.14%	4
Agree	42.86%	3
Unsure	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q4 The Governance Remuneration and Search committee’s mix of skills and experience enables it to effectively fulfil its role

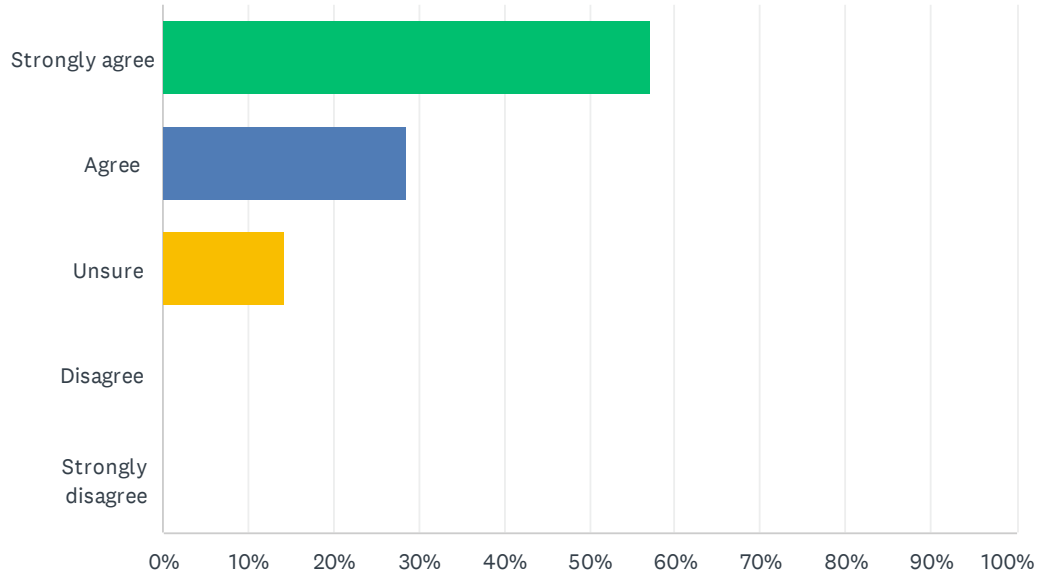
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	57.14%	4
Agree	28.57%	2
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q5 The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee ensures that governance structures and practices are effective and regulatory compliant

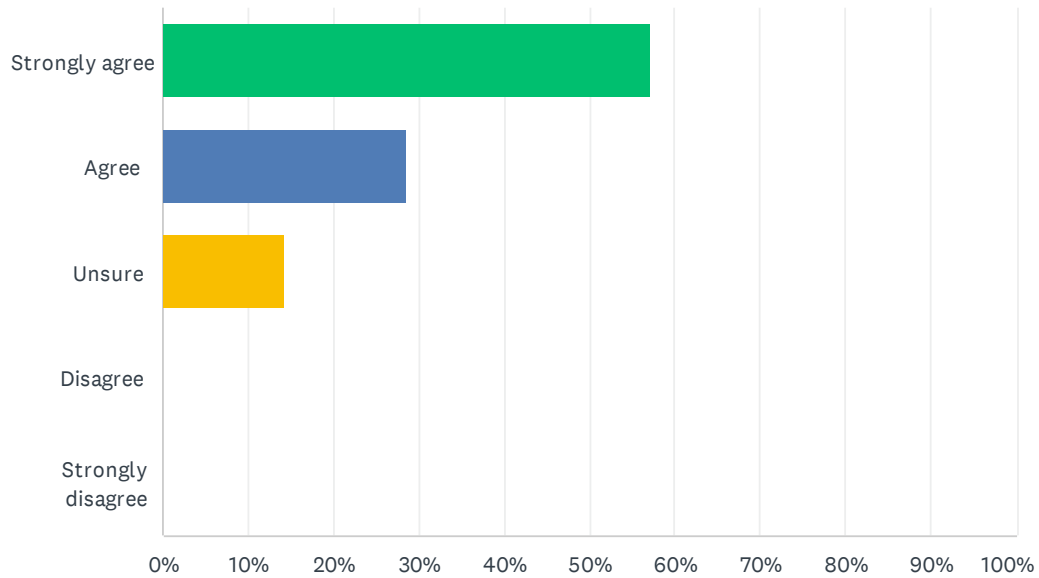
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	57.14%	4
Agree	28.57%	2
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q6 The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee has ensured that the College has appropriate and regularly reviewed governance, search and senior post holder policies and procedures

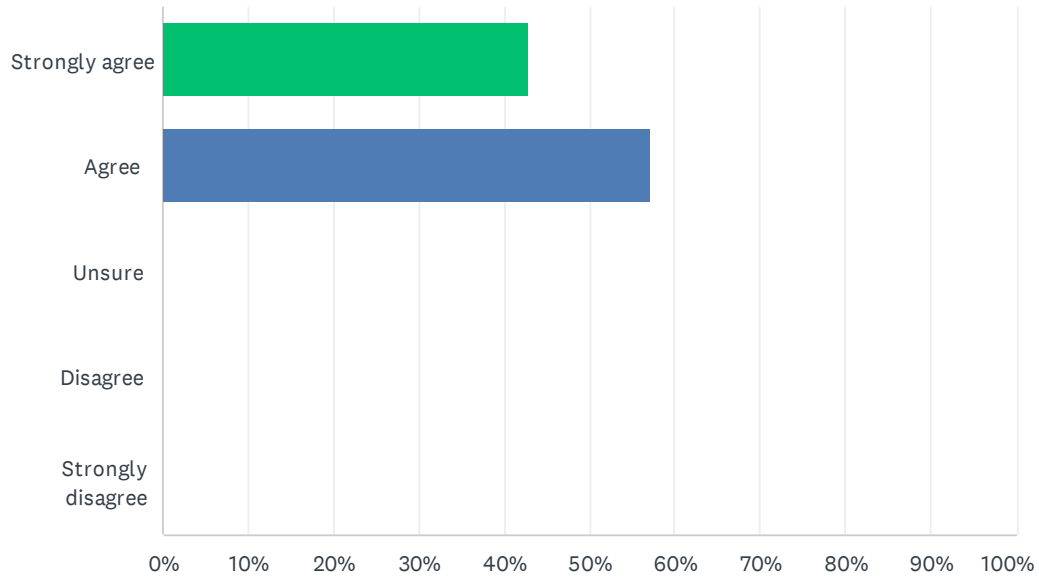
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	57.14%	4
Agree	28.57%	2
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q7 The Committee is assured of the arrangements for providing accurate, timely, and relevant governance, search and senior post holder data

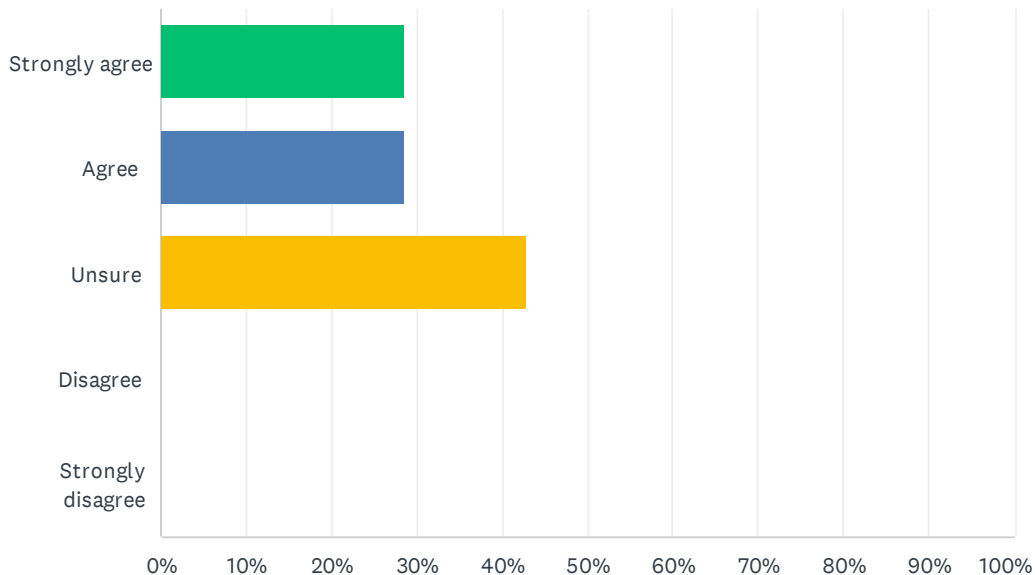
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	42.86%	3
Agree	57.14%	4
Unsure	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q8 Governance Remuneration and Search Committee monitors performance using key performance indicators

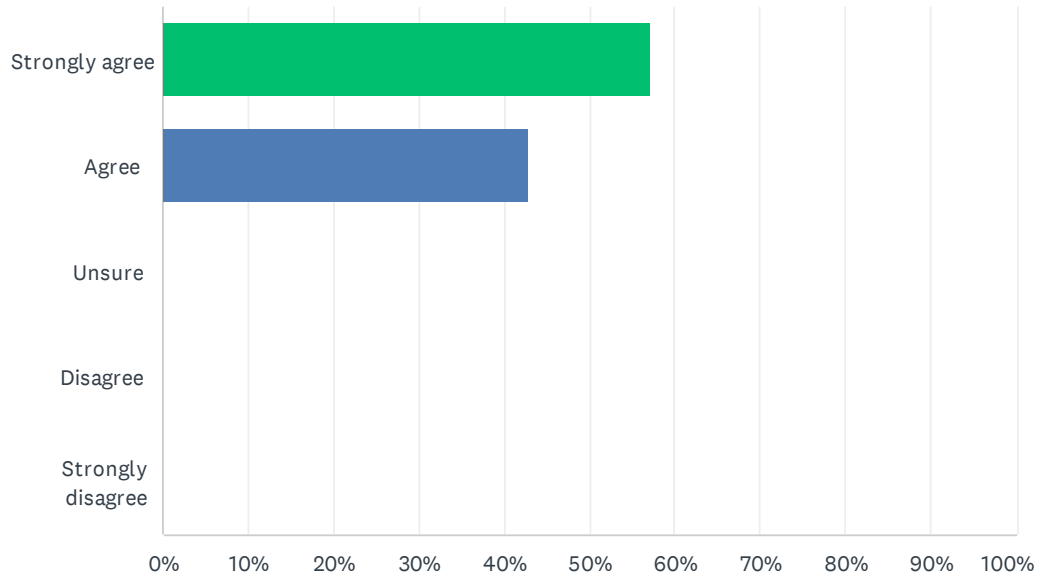
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	28.57%	2
Agree	28.57%	2
Unsure	42.86%	3
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

### Q9 The committee ensures that governor recruitment is transparent, inclusive, and skills-based.

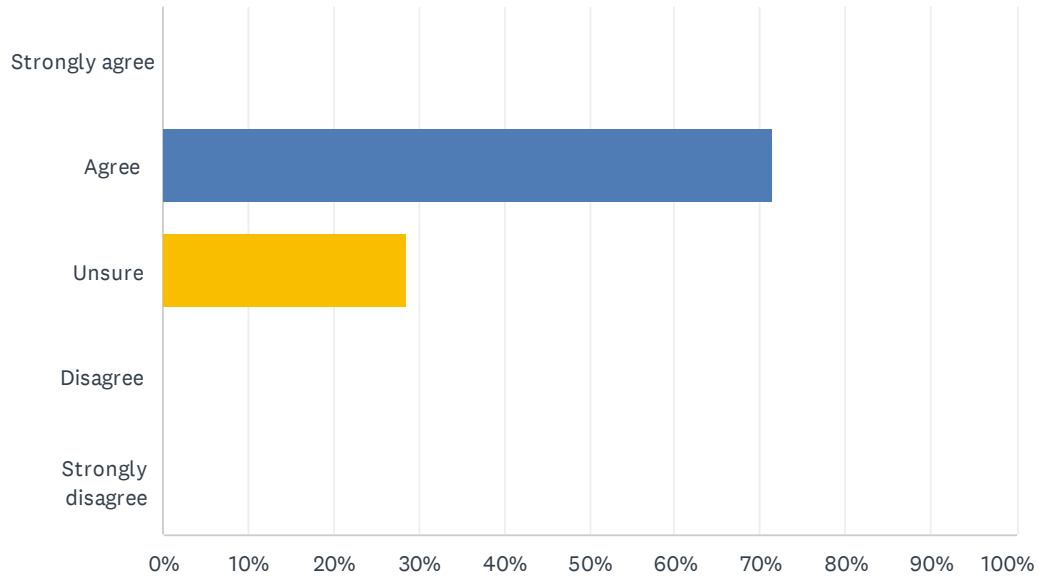
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	57.14%	4
Agree	42.86%	3
Unsure	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q10 The committee maintains an effective succession plan for key governance and Senior Post Holder roles.

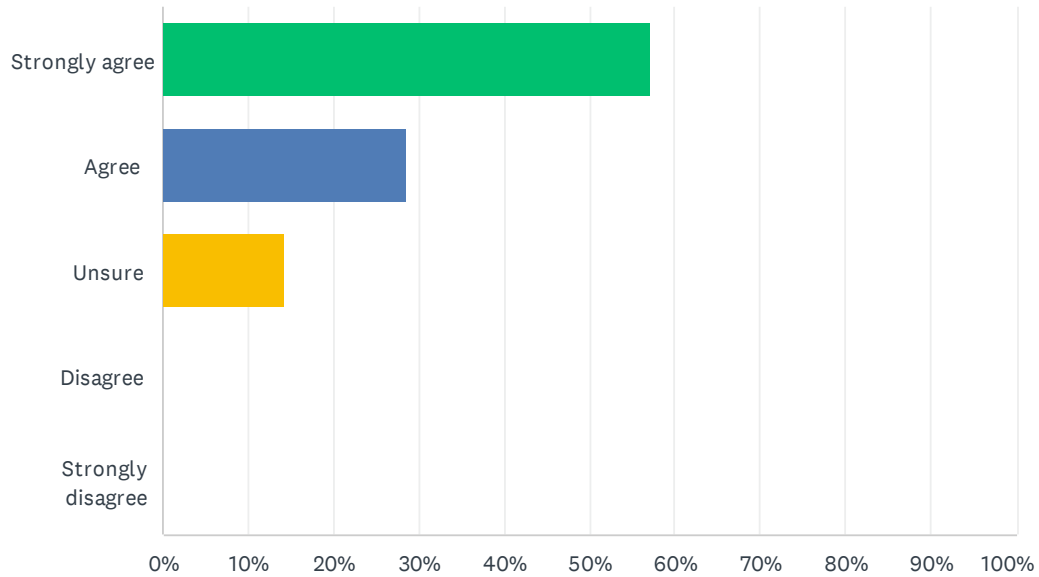
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.00%	0
Agree	71.43%	5
Unsure	28.57%	2
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q11 Senior post holder remuneration decisions are evidence-based, compliant, well-documented, and transparently reported

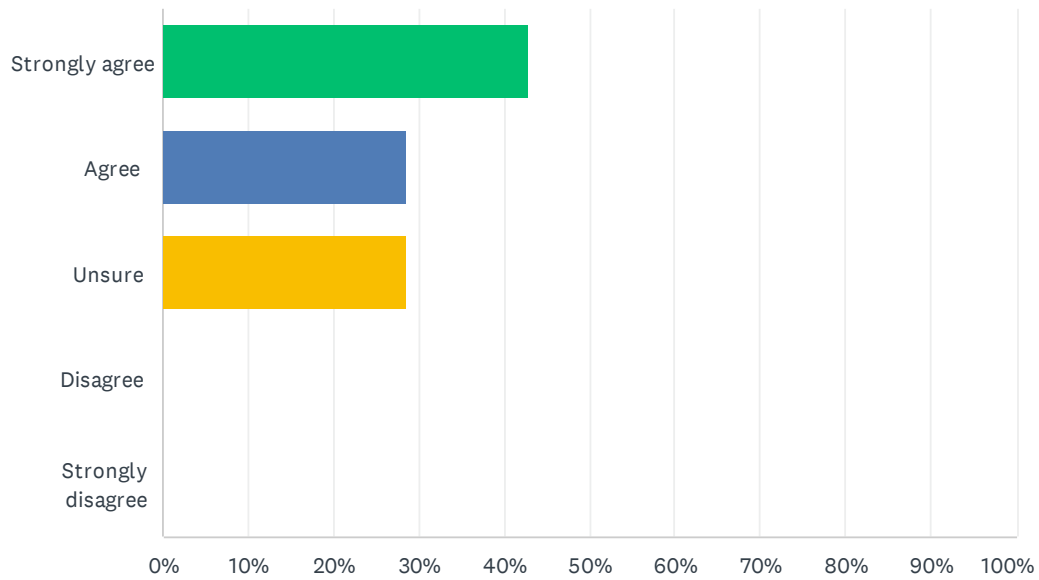
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	57.14%	4
Agree	28.57%	2
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q12 Meetings are well-structured and allow for effective scrutiny.

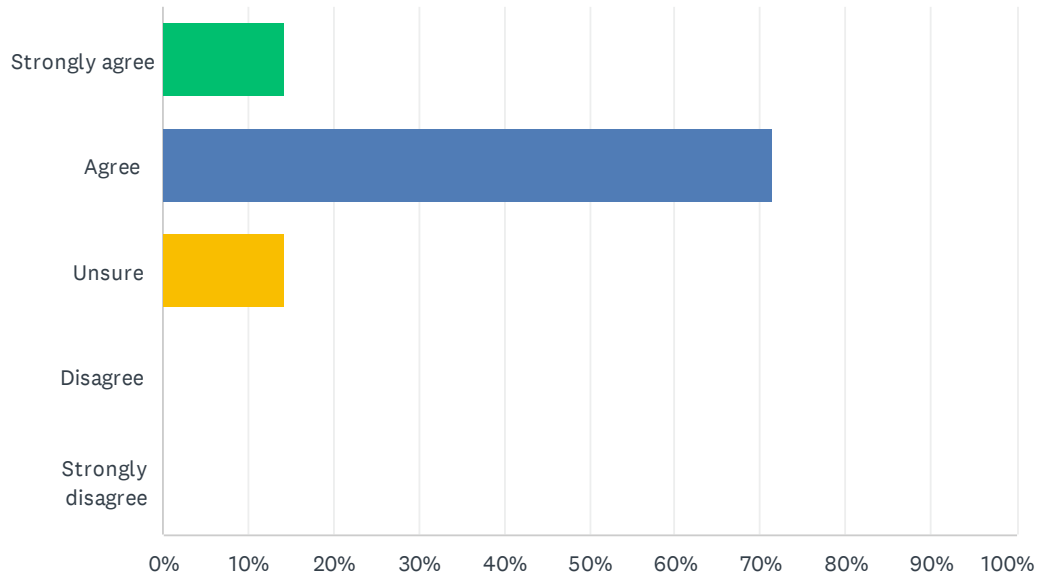
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	42.86%	3
Agree	28.57%	2
Unsure	28.57%	2
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

### Q13 The committee evaluates its own performance and impact.

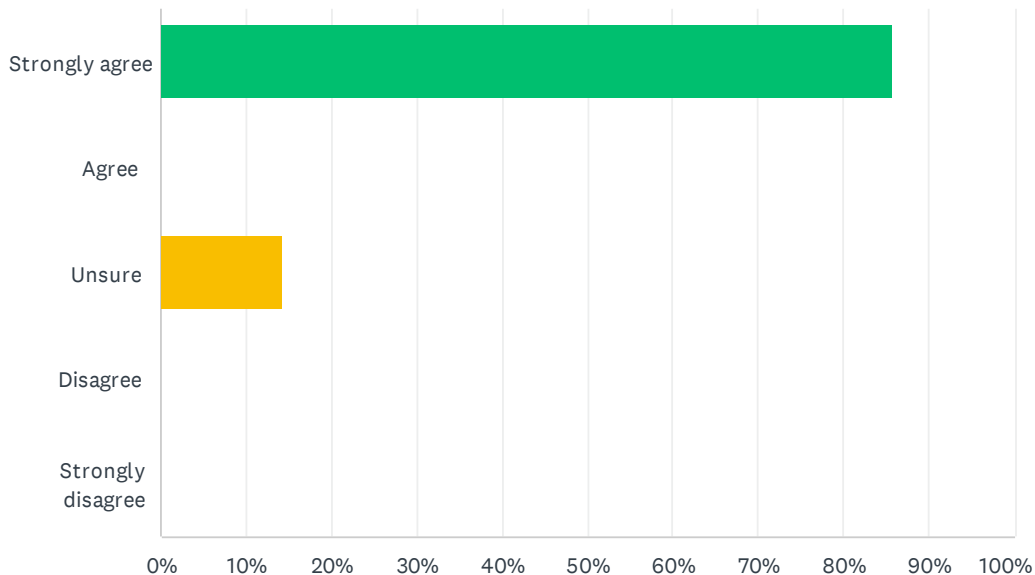
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	14.29%	1
Agree	71.43%	5
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q14 The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee operates in a culture of openness, trust, and mutual respect.

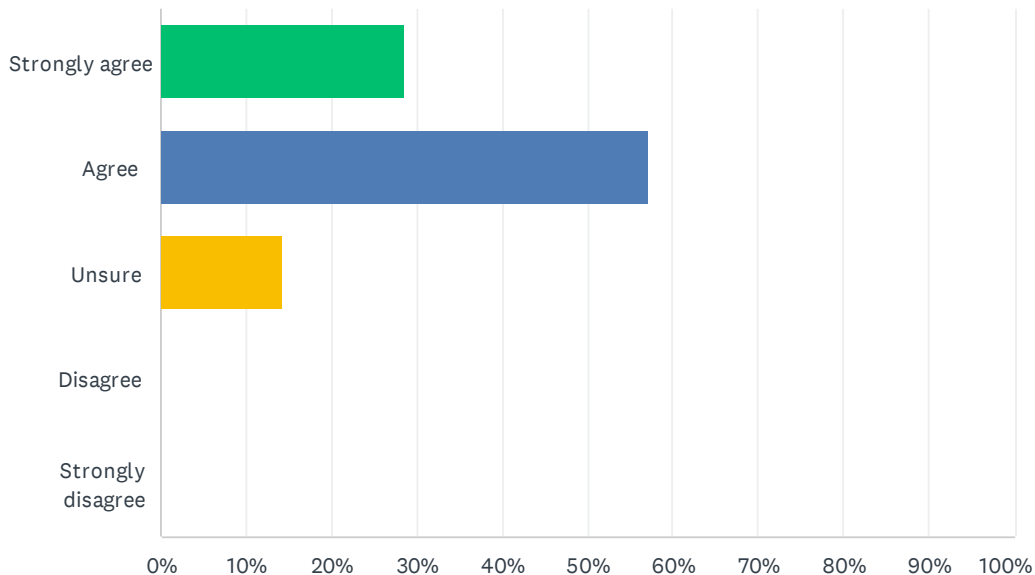
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	85.71%	6
Agree	0.00%	0
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q15 The committee reviews, challenges and receives assurance from the risk register?

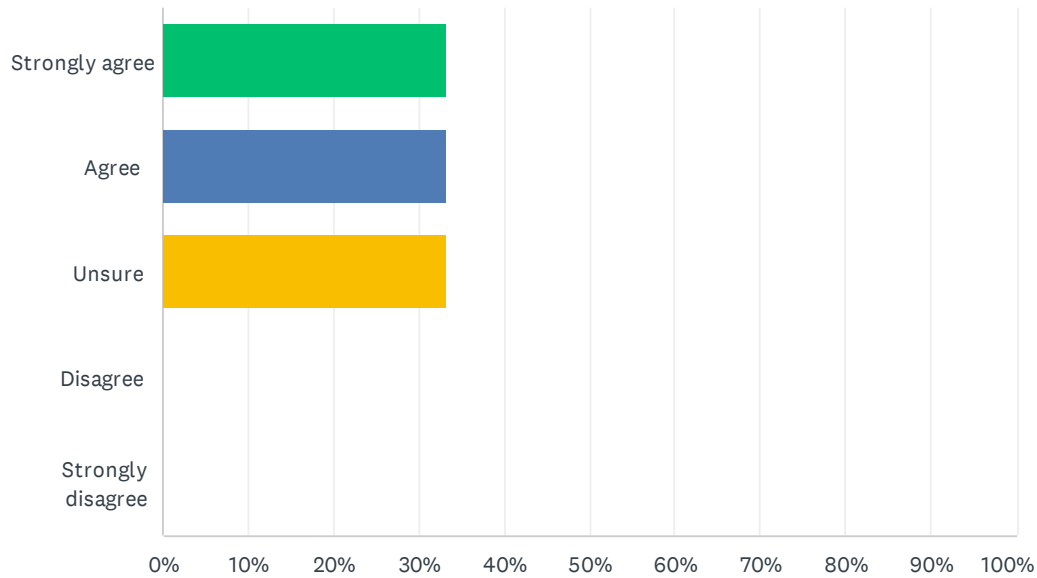
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	28.57%	2
Agree	57.14%	4
Unsure	14.29%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>

## Q17 The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee Chair chairs meetings effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision making process.

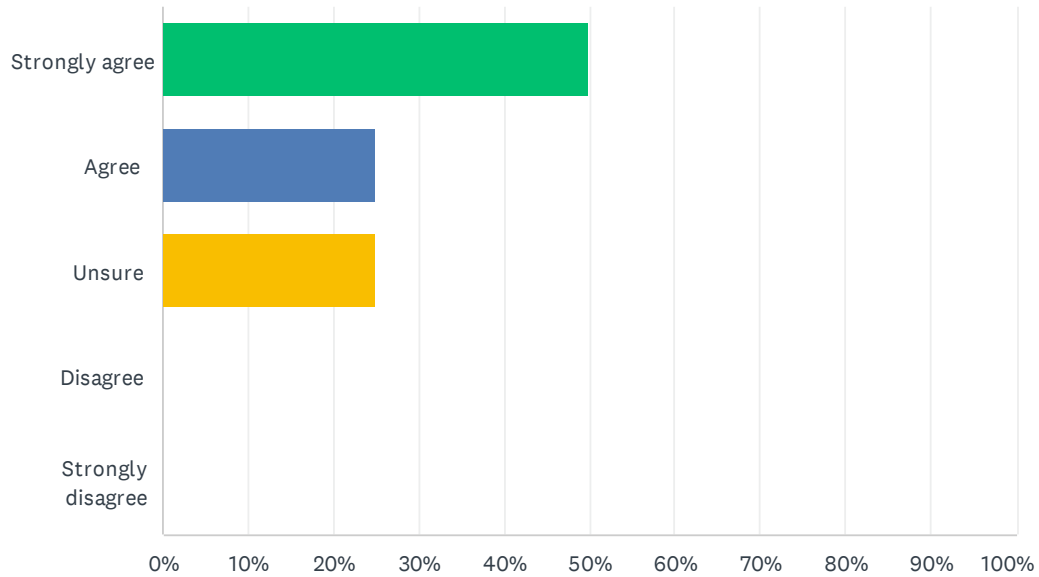
Answered: 3 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	33.33%	1
Agree	33.33%	1
Unsure	33.33%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3</b>

## Q18 The Governance Remuneration and Search Committee Chair is an effective leader of the Committee

Answered: 4 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	50.00%	2
Agree	25.00%	1
Unsure	25.00%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4</b>