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I am writing to inform you of the Government's view of the position of Stanmore College following the recent review by the Further Education (FE) Commissioner's team, and the steps that will need to be taken to secure improvement.

As you know, Ofsted graded the college as "inadequate" at its most recent inspection in September 2015 and I therefore asked the FE Commissioner, Sir David Collins, to carry out an assessment of the college and this was conducted between 14 and 18 December 2015.

The key finding of the assessment is that while the college has good cash reserves, the current predicted deficit and predicted rapid decline in income due to reduced student numbers mean that the college cannot survive as a stand-alone entity. This, taken together with doubts about, and the lack of confidence at all levels in, the capacity of the existing leadership to deliver the necessary improvements in a timely manner, has led the FE Commissioner to recommend that the college should be placed in Administered College status. The implications of this are set out in the document "The Strengthened Intervention Process

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-commissioner-intervention-process>

I note the Board recognises that the long term prospects of the college would best be served by some form of structural change such as a merger or other form of relationship with another FE provider and has begun to explore alternative options for the future. However, the FE Commissioner recommends that there should first be a FE Commissioner-led Structure and Prospects Appraisal and that this should begin straight away so that strategic options can be explored in advance of the forthcoming Area Review (due to commence in March 2016).

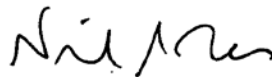
The FE Commissioner also makes a number of detailed recommendations for action that the college should take, placing particular emphasis on improving Governance mechanisms and performance and on rapidly improving the quality of provision for students currently attending the college.

I have carefully considered the assessment, and accept all the recommendations the FE Commissioner makes. I am therefore placing Stanmore College into Administered College status with immediate effect.

This will be a challenging time for the college and its students. I shall be looking to you, the other members of the Board and the college's Interim Principal to provide the appropriate leadership in these difficult times.

A summary of the assessment report and recommendations are provided with this letter. This summary and my letter to you will be published on www.gov.uk two weeks following the date on which this letter was sent.

If you have any questions about the assessment or this letter please contact Stephen Bagley in the Skills Funding Agency; stephen.bagley@sfa.bis.gov.uk in the first instance.



NICK BOLES MP