

Governance



Governance in Multi Academy Trusts

In a multi-academy trust, a single trust is responsible for a number of academies. The MAT consists of the members and the trustees.

Members

The members are akin to the shareholders of a company. They have ultimate control over the academy trust, with the ability to appoint some of the trustees and the right to amend the trust's articles of association.

Trustees

The trustees are responsible for the same three core governance functions performed by the governing body in a maintained school: setting the direction, holding the headteacher to account and ensuring financial probity. As charity trustees, they must also ensure that they are complying with charity law requirements. Academy trusts are charitable companies and the trustees are company directors and must comply with company law requirements. The duties are largely the same as those of a governor of a maintained school, such as regularly attending meetings, managing conflicts of interest, seeking advice from the academy's leadership team and ensuring the academy has appropriate procedures in place for reporting financial information.

Local Governors

Individuals who sit on local governing boards are referred to as 'local governors'.

This is because trustees can delegate governance functions to the local level. Trustees have complete discretion over what is delegated to each local governing board. They may, for example, decide to delegate all functions to academies in the chain that are performing well and only a few to those academies that need greater support. Alternatively, where a multi-academy trust wishes to retain all governance functions centrally, it may establish an advisory body at the school level, which has no formal governance function but which advises the board of trustees on its decisions.

Governance in Multi-academy Trusts, National College for Teaching and Leadership (2014)

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