

# Managing the membership of the board

## Governor categories and definitions

### How to use this document

There are several different categories of governor and trustee which can be a little confusing. This is intended to be used as a simple reference document.

#### 1. A reminder – terminology and the different categories of membership

- Governors** are appointed or elected to governing bodies in LA maintained schools.
  - However, be aware sometimes “governor” is also used in a non-technical way to describe anyone governing in any type of school.
  - Sometimes “governor” is also used to refer to those governing at local level in a multi-academy trust.
- Trustees** are appointed or elected to academy trust boards. In some trusts, these trustees are referred to as ‘**directors**’. Both terms are correct as academy trustees are legally charities and companies limited by guarantee. This is the case in church academy trusts where the term ‘trustee’ is reserved for those on the board of the separate trust that owns the land and assets.
- Individuals are elected or appointed to categories of membership in different ways and for specific periods (terms of office) according to the relevant legal framework.

#### 2. Governing board member categories

Here are some of the common categories you will find. There may be others, particularly in multi academy trusts.

##### Parent

Usually parents, those with parental responsibility for or carers of children at the school. Most are elected by the parents of the school or academy, following nominations and a ballot.

##### Staff

Someone who is employed to work at the school or academy, elected to the board by the school or academy staff.

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<b>Co-opted</b>	Appointed by the governors/trustees on the basis of the skills/experience/perspective they can bring to the governing board.
<b>Foundation</b>	Appointed by a foundation or charitable body associated with the school or academy. At schools or academies with a religious character, they help ensure that the religious character is upheld and promoted (in addition to their other governor responsibilities).
<b>Local authority (LA)</b>	Nominated by the LA to serve on the governing board of a maintained school. The governing board appoints them and can set eligibility criteria which nominees must meet.
<b>Partnership</b>	Appointed by the governing board of LA maintained voluntary or foundation schools to contribute to effective governance and at schools with a religious character, ensure that the religious character is upheld.
<b>Ex-officio</b>	Someone who has a place on the governing board because of the position they hold. In the majority of schools and trusts, headteachers have the right to be a governor or trustee.

### 3. Associate members serving on committees

Governing boards of LA maintained schools can appoint individuals with specific skills to serve on their committees. These individuals are known as “associate members”. Associate members have committee voting rights which do not extend to meetings of the full governing/trust board.