



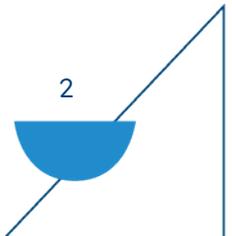
Developing a scheme of delegation

A guide for multi academy trusts

Updated July 2024

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Introduction

This guide describes the elements of an effective scheme of delegation and provides examples and resources to help trusts construct and review their own.

All multi academy trusts (MATs) are required to have a scheme of delegation (SoD) which details delegation of governance functions to the CEO, the trust board's committees, and to academy committees (often known as local governing bodies). The SoD should be as simple and systematic as possible, so that everyone is clear about their responsibilities.

SoDs should be reviewed annually and immediately where there is a change in trust management or organisational structure. The SoD must be published on the trust's website and should also feature on individual academy websites.

An effective scheme of delegation will:

- reflect the trust's ethos, promoting a positive climate and a culture of honesty, transparency, and accountability for the benefit of all stakeholders
- help to inform initial discussions with schools considering joining the MAT
- ensure the executive leadership is clear about which decisions the trust board retains, and the extent of executive powers
- be clear about who appoints and performance manages the chief executive, other senior executives, and the schools' headteachers
- identify where the trust board retains responsibility for determining policy, risk management, oversight of budgets, financial management and educational performance

Constructing your scheme of delegation

Constructing the SoD requires input from all governance stakeholders, with trustees and the CEO taking the lead. Often, the trust's [lead governance professional](#) will support drafting the document and provide advice and guidance.

All those involved in trust governance (particularly those governing as part of a local tier) should be made aware of any changes to the SoD and what this means in practice.

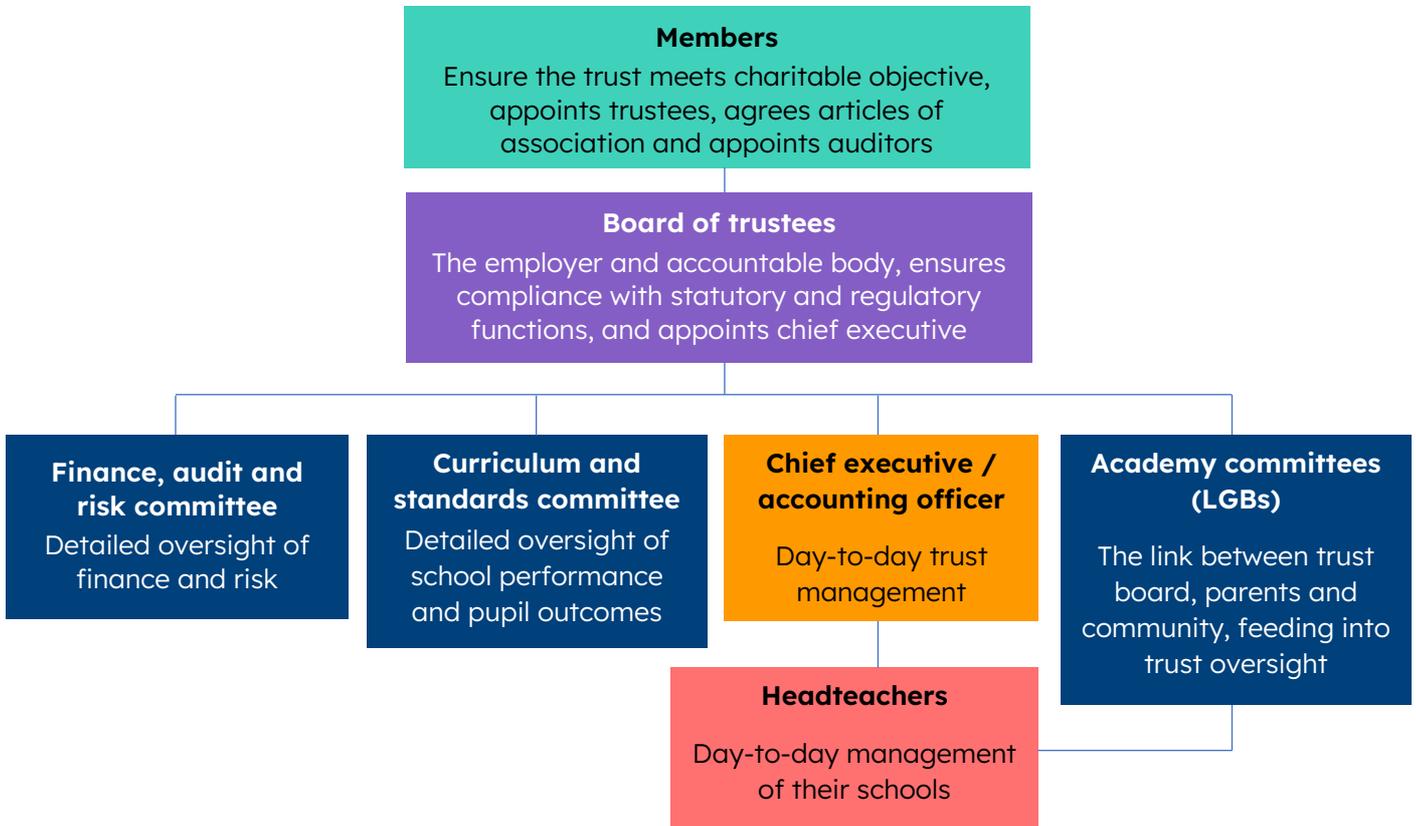
Local delegation

Local governance within MATs forms the bridge between the trust board and its schools. Irrespective of trust size and nature, [NCA research](#) shows that the 'local tier' carries out similar core functions, characterised as the 4Ss: **s**tandards, **s**takeholders, **s**afeguarding and **S**END.

Read our [guidance on the role of the local tier](#) to find out more.

Governance structures

The SoD should be clear about how the trust structures governance. While trusts have differing structures, most reflect the following example, with three distinct layers:



Delegation to an intervention board

Some trusts use an intervention board to manage any schools requiring rapid improvement. Intervention boards generally consist of a small number of senior executives, plus one or two trustees or academy committee members who meet regularly to monitor agreed actions and take key decisions.

Delegation to hubs or clusters

Large trusts sometimes use a hub or cluster model where academy committees are delegated functions related to more than one school (based on phase or region, for example). These are usually chaired by the senior executive leading and managing the hub or cluster, with a mix of other executives sitting on it as well as academy committee representatives.

Roles and responsibilities

Effective delegation relies on a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. As such, we recommend that trusts summarise roles in their SoD document, drawing on the following descriptions and accompanying NGA resources.

Role	Description & duties
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guardians of the governance of the trust, ensuring the charitable objective is fulfilled Agree the trust’s articles of association, appoint trustees and external auditors Receive the annual report, accounts and other information <p>There should be clear separation between layers of governance – we recommend that members should not also be trustees</p> <p>See guidance on the role of members</p>
Trustees (sometimes known as ‘directors’)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legally accountable for all statutory functions and performance of all the schools within the trust The trust creates information pathways between the trust board, the academy committees and the chief executive <p>See also trustee role description</p>
Trust board committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustees delegate some governance functions to board committees, one of which must include audit and risk, which advises on the adequacy of the trust’s controls and risks Most trusts delegate detailed scrutiny of financial management and school performance to board committees
Academy committees (also known as ‘local governing body’ or similar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibilities vary depending on the role given to it by the trust board Most carry out functions that cover the 4Ss: standards, stakeholders, safeguarding and SEND We recommend that trustees should not sit on academy committees in order to retain clear lines of accountability <p>See guidance on the role of the local tier</p>
Chief executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day management of the trust Leadership and management of the central executive team and the schools’ headteachers Reports to the trust board and its committees <p>See CEO job description</p>
Headteachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day management of the trust’s schools Shares information with the academy committee about how the school operates to enable monitoring and scrutiny of key policies and improvement plans

Delegation matrix

A delegation matrix (a simple table documenting delegated responsibilities) is the most substantive element of most trusts' SoD.

Separate [terms of reference](#) for each of the board's committees should supplement the SoD and document delegated responsibilities in more detail. Many trusts also create terms of reference for academy committees.

The following example delegation matrix provides a starting point that covers statutory and essential responsibilities.

[Download an editable delegation matrix here](#)

Key	
A Accountable (and approver)	Answerable for the task being delivered. Delegates the task to those responsible. There should be only one group/person accountable for each task/decision.
R Responsible	Responsible for delivery and does the work to achieve the task. Can be shared between groups/individuals.
C Consulted	Needs to be involved before the decision is made. Communication is two-way – these are important stakeholders or have relevant specialist knowledge.
*Highlighted	Statutory expectation or necessary to comply with articles of association or funding agreement.
Consult/seek consent from diocese	Academy trusts using Church model articles are required to involve and seek consent from the Diocesan Corporate Member on delegated matters pertaining to church academies, as indicated throughout this template.

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
1. Board business							
1.1	Appoint/remove members	*A/R					YES
1.2	Appoint/remove trustees	*A/R	*A/R				YES
1.3	Elect chair of trustees		*A/R				
1.4	Appoint and remove board committee chairs		*A/R				
1.5	Determine powers of chair in urgent situations		A/R				
1.6	Establish and review trust governance structure		*A/R	C			
1.7	Agree named safeguarding trustee		*A/R				
1.8	Agree named trustee for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)		*A/R				
1.9	Agree named careers trustee <i>(required in secondary schools)</i>		*A/R				
1.10	Appoint/remove academy committee chairs		*A/R		C		
1.11	Appoint/remove academy committee members (local governors)		*A/R		C		
1.12	Appoint trust governance professional		*A	R			
1.13	Agree academy committee clerking arrangements		*A/R		C		
1.14	Articles of association: review		*A/R				YES
1.15	Articles of association: ratify changes	*A/R					
1.16	Agree committee terms of reference		*A/R	C	C	C	
1.17	Complete annual review of scheme of delegation		*A	R	C	C	YES

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
1.18	Commission external review of trust board effectiveness every three years	C	A/R	C			
1.19	Complete annual trust board self-review		A/R		C		
1.20	Complete review of local governance		A/R	R	C	C	
1.21	Publish governance arrangements on trust and academy websites		*A	R			
1.22	Ensure trust website is compliant and effective		*A	R			
1.23	Ensure academy websites are compliant and effective		*A	A		R	
1.24	Submit annual report on the performance of the trust to members and publish		A	R			
	2. Vision and strategy						
2.1	Determine trust's vision, strategy and key priorities		A/R	R	C	C	YES
2.2	Ensure engagement with stakeholders regarding vision, values and strategic priorities		A	R	R	R	
2.3	Apply trust vision and strategy to individual academies		A	R	C	R	
2.4	Agree trust growth plans		A/R	R			YES
2.5	Determine trust-wide policies		*A	R			
2.6	Determine academy level policies		*A	R	C	R	
2.7	Establish risk register and conduct regular review		*A/R	R			
2.8	Determine a programme of internal audit in line with the risk register and monitor its delivery		*A	R			

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
3. Finance and operations							
3.1	Appoint and remove external auditors	*A/R	C				
3.2	Appoint and performance manage chief financial officer		*A	R			
3.3	Produce trust's scheme of financial delegation		*A	R			
3.4	Receive external auditor's report	*A/R					
3.5	Action recommendations made arising from audits		*A	R		R	
3.6	Produce annual report and accounts		*A	R			
3.7	Submit ESFA required reports and returns		*A	R			
3.8	Agree budget plan to support delivery of trust strategic priorities		A	R			
3.9	Agree budget plan to support delivery of academy strategic priorities		*A	A	C	R	
3.10	Monitor trust budget		*A/R	R			
3.11	Carry out benchmarking and trust-wide value for money evaluation		C	A/R	C	C	
3.12	Agree reporting and monitoring arrangements for trust and academy budgets		*A/R	R	C	C	
3.13	Monitor academy estates to ensure safe and well maintained		*A		R	R	
3.14	Agree data protection policy (and privacy notice)		*A	R	C	C	
3.15	Agree health and safety policy		*A	R	C	C	

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
3.16	Agree premises management documents, including <i>Estate vision, Estate strategy and Asset management plan</i>		*A	R	C	C	YES
	4. Workforce						
4.1	Appoint and dismiss CEO/Accounting Officer		*A/R				
4.2	Performance manage CEO		*A/R				
4.3	Agree CEO remuneration		*A/R				
4.4	Conduct executive team performance management		C	A/R			
4.5	Conduct headteacher performance management			A/R	C		
4.6	Agree headteacher remuneration			A/R	C		
4.7	Review and agree academy staff appraisal procedure and pay progression		A	R		C	
4.8	Determine executive team staffing structure		A	R	C	C	
4.9	Determine academy staffing structure			A	C	R	
4.10	Headteacher appointments and dismissal		C	A/R	C		YES for appointments at Church schools
4.11	Trust wide pay policy, terms and conditions of employment		*A	R			
4.12	Determine disciplinary, grievance and capability policies		*A	R			

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
4.13	Undertake panel hearings for disciplinary and capability matters relating to the CEO		A/R				
4.14	Undertake panel hearings for disciplinary, grievance and capability matters relating to the central team		A/R				
4.15	Undertake panel hearings for disciplinary, grievance and capability matters relating to academy staff		A	C	R	C	
4.16	Approval of exit payments/early retirement/pension discretion (above a certain threshold)		*A/R	C			
4.17	Agree whistleblowing policy		*A/R				
	5. Pupils and learning						
5.1	Agree safeguarding and child protection policy		*A	R	C	C	
5.2	Agree attendance policy		*A	R	C	C	
5.3	Agree school uniform policy		*A	R	C	C	
5.4	Agree policy for pupils with SEND		*A	R	C	C	
5.5	Agree policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions		*A	R	C	C	
5.6	Agree charging and remissions policy		*A	R	C	C	
5.7	Agree behaviour policy		*A	R	C	C	
5.8	Agree careers provider access policy statement		*A	R	C	C	

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
5.9	Agree relationships education (primary) and relationships and sex education (secondary) policy		*A	R	C	C	
5.10	Agree equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement and monitor delivery		*A/R	R	C	C	
5.11	Approve trust-wide curriculum		A	R	C	C	
5.12	Ensure high standards of teaching and learning		A	R	C	R	
5.13	Set targets for trust outcomes		A	R			
5.14	Plan and deliver individual academy improvement interventions and strategies			A	C	R	
5.15	Determine & monitor use of pupil premium and sports premium		A	R	C	C	
5.16	Ensure provision of religious education		A	R	C	C	YES for Church schools
5.17	Ensure delivery of collective worship		A	R	C	C	YES for Church schools
5.18	Set the dates of school terms and holidays		A	R	C	C	
5.19	Set the times of school sessions		A	C	C	R	
5.20	Review headteacher decision to suspend/exclude pupils		*A/R		R		
5.21	Monitor rates of suspension and exclusion across the trust		A/R	R	C	C	

		Members	Trust board	CEO	Academy committees	Headteachers	Consult/seek consent from diocese?
5.22	Agree admissions policy		*A	R	C	C	YES for Church schools
5.23	Implement admissions appeal process		*A	R	C	C	
5.24	Determine complaints procedure		*A/R	C	C		
5.25	Implement complaints procedure		*A	R	R	R	
5.26	Review complaints at panel stage		A/R		R		
6. Community							
6.1	Develop stakeholder partnerships across the trust		A	R	C	C	YES for Church stakeholders
6.2	Develop stakeholder partnerships at academy level			C	A	R	

NGA is the national membership association for governors, trustees and governance professionals in England's state schools and trusts.

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