

# What does the governance professional do?

## Declaration Working with the Chair, SEL and others

### Building relationships

Arrange regular meetings with your Chair, particularly before and after governing board meetings, so that you are both clear on how the meeting will be run and how actions from decisions made at the meeting will be undertaken.

Meet with your SEL to establish ground rules for how you will work together and what the expectations are regarding timely responses to emails or other communications, receipt of documents to be sent out with meeting agendas and any potential conflicts of interest if you also have other employment at the school.

In the longer term, schedule in regular meetings with the chair and SEL to discuss draft agendas for governing board and committee meetings (as relevant)

In order to build effective working relationships with governors/trustees, communicate regularly with them during their induction to make sure they have all the information they need and understand the expectations of the role.

When a governor and trustee is appointed to a new position, eg SEND governor, follow-up after the meeting to ensure they know what the role entails, procedures for reporting back to the governing board and how to arrange monitoring meetings with relevant staff members and other stakeholders.

It also pays to be proactive in helping governors and trustees understand the expectations and challenges of their role. This includes at the start arranging an induction programme, and then through arranging suitable on-going training, development and briefings.

### Confidentiality

As the clerk, you will be become aware of much confidential information, such as reasons for governor and trustee absence from meetings, appraisals of governors/trustees and panel business such as complaints and exclusions; you need to ensure that not only you maintain confidentiality but that all other members of the governing board are aware of the need for confidentiality. This will help continue to build effective working relationships as trust is built up.

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### Independence

Whilst it is vital to build effective working relationships with the chair, SEL, governors/trustees, staff and other stakeholders, your role will involve much independent working, not only when undertaking work directly for the board such as meeting preparation and follow-up, but also to organise training for yourself and keep up-to-date with relevant governance information. The results of your independent work should be evident through your efficient and effective working practices and this will strengthen relationships with governors/trustees and give them confidence in the advice and guidance you give them.

### Impartiality

It is vital that you remain impartial in all your undertakings as a clerk; your governing board will have more confidence in your professionalism when dealing with potentially sensitive issues such as conflict of interests, if they know you are impartial.

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### Appendix

#### Declaration of Eligibility for Trustees template

By signing this form you declare that you:

- are willing to act as a trustee and consenting to act as a Director of the company
- understand your organisation's purposes (objects) and rules set out in the NGA's governing document
- Are not automatically disqualified from acting as trustee of a charity
- Give your consent for NGA to carry out any relevant checks, including, if necessary, identity checks and checks against the Charity Commission's list of removed or disqualified trustees.
- agree to be bound by the NGA's code of conduct for trustees
- agree to be bound by the NGA's conflict of interest policy

Name:

Signed:

Date:

This declaration is based on the Charity Commission's Declaration of Eligibility and responsibility for newly appointed Trustees (CC5C).