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#### Guidance

# Becoming an academy: top tips for governors

Updated 28 January 2015

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1.

## Introduction

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) has developed this guidance for governors and their boards to consider before becoming an academy.

2.

# Top tips

- Review your governance arrangements to ensure that you have a board of governors that
  is structured and constituted to deliver high standards of governance. The model articles
  of association provide a lot of flexibility. Academies should review the size of the board
  and the skills it requires, and ensure all current members are able actively to contribute
  relevant skills and experience.
- Read your Funding Agreement and The Academies Financial Handbook
- Set up your accounts the sooner you appoint statutory external auditors the better as they will help you to sort your governance and financial frameworks.
- Ensure you understand your <u>financial assurance and compliance responsibilities</u> and are confident you are have the systems and the reports that allow you to monitor the financial health of the academy.
- Sort out your insurance or opt in to the <u>risk protection arrangement (RPA)</u> for academy trusts.
- Ensure you have a complaints procedure which is compliant with The Education
   (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Notify the <u>Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)</u> in writing that the academy is opening and will now be responsible for processing personal and pupil data.

3.

### Additional reference material

- The Governors' Handbook provides information about the role and legal duties of the board of governors in maintained schools and academies (including free schools).
- Academies are charitable trusts but the principal regulator for academies is the Secretary
  of State for Education and not the Charity Commission. Trustees will however find the
  Charity Commission's advice and guidance helpful in understanding and carrying out their
  roles.
- School Admissions Code and School Admission Appeals Code
- The <u>capital funding routes</u> which are eligible to open academies.

4.

# **Contacting us**

Our <u>website</u> should be the first port of call for all your enquiries. If the website does not answer your query or if you have any specific questions about academy governance arrangements, please email our enquiry service.

#### **EFA** academy questions

Email For all academies and free schools with academy.questions@education.gsi.go queries for the Education Funding Agency v.uk

# **EFA** contacting you

5.

We send a welcome letter and a welcome pack to your academy on the day of opening. We subsequently communicate with academies mostly through email and the <u>EFA e-bulletin</u>. It is therefore really important we have the right contact details for your academy.

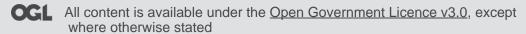
Within the welcome pack is a link to an <u>online contacts form</u> which enables you to supply contact details for the key roles within your academy and ensure they are subscribed to the EFA e-bulletin.

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