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Guidance

Multi-academy trust (MAT): resources

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1. Establishing or developing your trust

1.1 Good practice guidance

We've produced [good practice guidance for MATs](#) on:

- establishing a new MAT
- growing an existing MAT

The good practice guidance also explains what regional schools commissioners (RSCs) look for when they assess MATs.

We've included resources to support MATs in understanding their school improvement capacity and development priorities. The first of these is a [school improvement framework](#) developed in partnership with MAT leaders in the south-west RSC region.

1.2 Regional schools commissioners

RSCs are the best point of contact for multi-academy trusts (MATs) looking for advice. [Contact your local RSC office](#) if you:

- are an academy that needs guidance on how to become a MAT
- are a MAT that wishes to grow
- want further information about the support your RSC can give MATs

2. People and leadership

2.1 Chief executive of a MAT

Headteachers and others who want to become the chief executive officer (CEO) of a MAT may need to gain additional skills. You can find [training programmes for school leaders](#) that cover a range of skills.

The [National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership](#) (NPQEL) can develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours that a high-performing executive leader needs.

2.2 Model job descriptions

You may want to use [model job descriptions](#) that established MATs have shared. These can help you recruit to leadership roles, including executive principal, finance director and lead teacher.

3. School improvement

3.1 Tools to measure performance

The East Midlands and Humber region has developed a toolkit that includes [example dashboards and key performance indicators](#) (KPIs) to help you monitor your MAT's performance.

3.2 School-to-school support

Our [school-to-school support directory](#) will help you find information about:

- [teaching schools](#)
- [national leaders of education](#)
- [national leaders of governance](#)
- [specialist leaders of education \(SLEs\)](#)

You can use the school-to-school support directory to find teaching schools in your area. SLEs are designated, managed and brokered by teaching schools. To secure bespoke SLE support for staff in your trust, please contact teaching schools in your area to discuss the nature of your requirements.

4. Governance

4.1 Governance handbook

The [governance handbook](#) provides guidance on the roles and duties of governing boards, and advice on the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be effective.

4.2 Governance structures

The East Midlands and Humber RSC toolkit includes [sample governance structures and schemes of delegation for MATs](#).

4.3 Recruiting trustees

Contact [Academy Ambassadors](#) to get the free support they offer to MATs that want to recruit business people to their trust. Academy Ambassadors have produced:

- guidance on [attracting and recruiting academy trustees](#)
- an [induction pack for academy trustees and directors](#)

You can also use the [Inspiring Governance](#) service, which provides governance recruitment support. The support they offer includes:

- an online matching service for academy trusts and volunteers
- help for academy trusts looking to recruit a chair of trustees

4.4 Effective governance

The [competency framework for governance](#) sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours that boards need to be effective.

The [clerking competency framework](#) sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to provide professional clerking to governing and trust boards.

School and academy governors can use the [top 10 planning checks for governors](#) to explore questions that help schools manage their resources and money efficiently.

The NGA has developed several resources to help trustee boards fulfil their functions effectively. This includes:

- a [checklist of 21 questions for self-assessment](#)
- guidance on [forming or joining a group of schools](#)
- ‘[Being strategic: a guide for governing boards](#)’ - to help governors and trustees meet their responsibilities effectively
- ‘[School leaders and governing boards: what do we expect of each other?](#)’

Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA): The Governance Institute provides [academy guidance notes](#).

Freedom and Autonomy for Schools - National Association (FASNA) has also produced a number of [guides on effective governance](#).

4.5 Governance programmes

The governance of a MAT is very different to that of a single academy or maintained school and a different set of skills will be required. Boards can access a range of DfE funded training including the [governance leadership and clerking development programmes](#). The programmes aim to support the work of their board(s) to increase the effectiveness of its governance.

5. Growth and development

These tools will help you understand how your MAT may need to change as it

develops:

- [Characteristics of successful MATs](#) - the National Schools Commissioner Sir David Carter developed this tool
- [resources for new and growing MATs](#) - a collection of resources for MATs that wish to become sponsors or that would like to grow
- guidance on [growing MATs in the East of England and north-east London](#) - Cambridge Education worked with MATs to produce this guide

[The MAT development programme resource](#) is a list of questions created for participants in the 2018 programme. MATs not on the programme can use the questions if they want help to identify their own development priorities.

6. Finance

6.1 Funding, finance and school resource management

The [Academies Financial Handbook](#) sets out the financial management, control and reporting requirements that apply to all academy trusts. It describes a financial framework for trusts that focuses on principles rather than detailed guidance and reflects their accountability to Parliament and to the public. Compliance with the handbook is a condition of each trust's funding agreement.

DfE and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) publish a range of information on funding, financial management and wider school resource management:

- [academies revenue funding allocation](#)
- [schools financial health and resource management guidance](#)
- a package of tools and support on school resource management, including guidance for [school financial benchmarking](#) with a range of deals for schools to save financially
- the [schools financial efficiency metric tool](#) provides schools in England with an indication of their efficiency compared with similar schools

If you need to review your schools' finances, you can [find an organisation that provides financial advice in our supplier directory](#).

Academy trusts must submit financial returns to the ESFA as part of their funding agreement. Read our [guidance on submitting academy finance returns](#).

[Understanding your data: a guide for school governors and academy trustees](#).

This guidance explains how to collect and analyse data, and what your collected data can tell you about your school's performance.

6.2 Managing your estate and capital funding effectively

Capital funding is the money schools spend on their buildings and facilities. DfE and ESFA have published guidance on maintaining schools in your estate:

- [Good estate management guidance](#)
- [school capital funding allocations](#)
- [capital funding for MATs](#)
- [academies capital funding and support](#)
- [funding for school buildings and land](#)

The [Trust Network offers a forum of support](#) for MATs to help them maintain safe, warm and dry school buildings (requires a Yammer login).

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