

# Building better *trust boards*

Recruiting the right people with the  
right skills to your trust board



*“The Academy Ambassadors Programme provides great board opportunities for our senior leaders. They offer rewarding roles which develop leadership skills, behaviours and provide great opportunities to network with colleagues from different sectors and backgrounds.”*

**Rolls Royce**

**Academy  
Ambassadors**  
A NEW SCHOOLS NETWORK PROGRAMME



# What skills and experience are required on the board of an academy trust?

The key skill for all trustees is to be able to offer strategic guidance, challenge and support across a range of areas including, but not exclusively, their own professional skill set. e.g. ALL trustees should offer a view as how well the public funds are spent.



## Auditing

Review the accounts/statements from CFO. Offer challenge as to how/where money is spent



## Branding and Marketing

Offer advice on messaging to stakeholder via challenge to execs



## CEO and General Management

Challenge expansion plans and whether systems are robust depending on complexity of organisation



## Change / Growth Management

Offer challenge for growth and transformation



## Corporate Governance

Advise on structures for more efficient/prudent operation/management



## Entrepreneur / Founder

Challenging for innovation and advising on when systems need to change as trust develops/moves to a new phase



## Finance

Ensure best value by challenging leaders over spending decisions and if budgets are aligned to priorities



## Human Resources

Challenge the execs on HR policies, Performance Management, recruitment, retention, well-being



## IT / Technology

Challenge leaders on organisation- wide integration, efficiency and procurement



## Legal and Compliance

Challenge leaders over matters of due diligence and the way they are handling complex personnel cases or contracts they are minded to enter into



## Property and Real Estate

Offer challenge to leaders in relation to how the trust manages its property portfolio including its use of capital development funding and facilities management



## Risk

Offer challenge to executive as to how effectively they manage the range of risks as well as the trust's risk register

## COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR GOVERNANCE

Principles and personal attributes are important for a strong board, alongside skills and knowledge. The DfE Governance Competency Framework sets out the key competencies expected of boards. Professional, external board recruitment through the Academy Ambassadors Programme can fill gaps, or enhance overall board capability, in these competencies.



# How do I recruit a high-calibre board?

*The Academy Ambassadors Programme attracts strong board candidates from business and the professions.*

The business leaders appointed via the Programme are motivated by a desire to give back. They also want to develop the skills of school leavers and to boost social mobility for pupils from deprived backgrounds.

*Some of the organisations already involved:*

LLOYDS  
BANKING  
GROUP



Rolls-Royce®



## RECRUIT WITH THE ACADEMY AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME:

1. Visit website to complete trust specification form [academyambassadors.org/trusts/recruit-non-executive-director](https://academyambassadors.org/trusts/recruit-non-executive-director)
2. Discuss your recruitment need with a Governance Specialist Advisor.
3. The Academy Ambassadors programme will advertise the role, headhunt and following this will shortlist candidate CVs.
4. The trust interviews the shortlisted candidates.
5. The trust will approve and vet the selected candidate

Your new board members automatically become part of the Ambassador network of leading board members from trusts across England.



*“Recruiting **high quality trustees** with the right skills profile and values that align with our trust is absolutely **crucial** to the health of the organisation. The Academy Ambassadors programme made the **impossible job** of finding talented trustees possible and delivered **outstanding outcomes** for REACH2.”*

**Sir Steve Lancashire, Chief Executive, Reach2 Academy Trust**

New  
Schools  
Network

Academy  
Ambassadors  
A NEW SCHOOLS NETWORK PROGRAMME



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