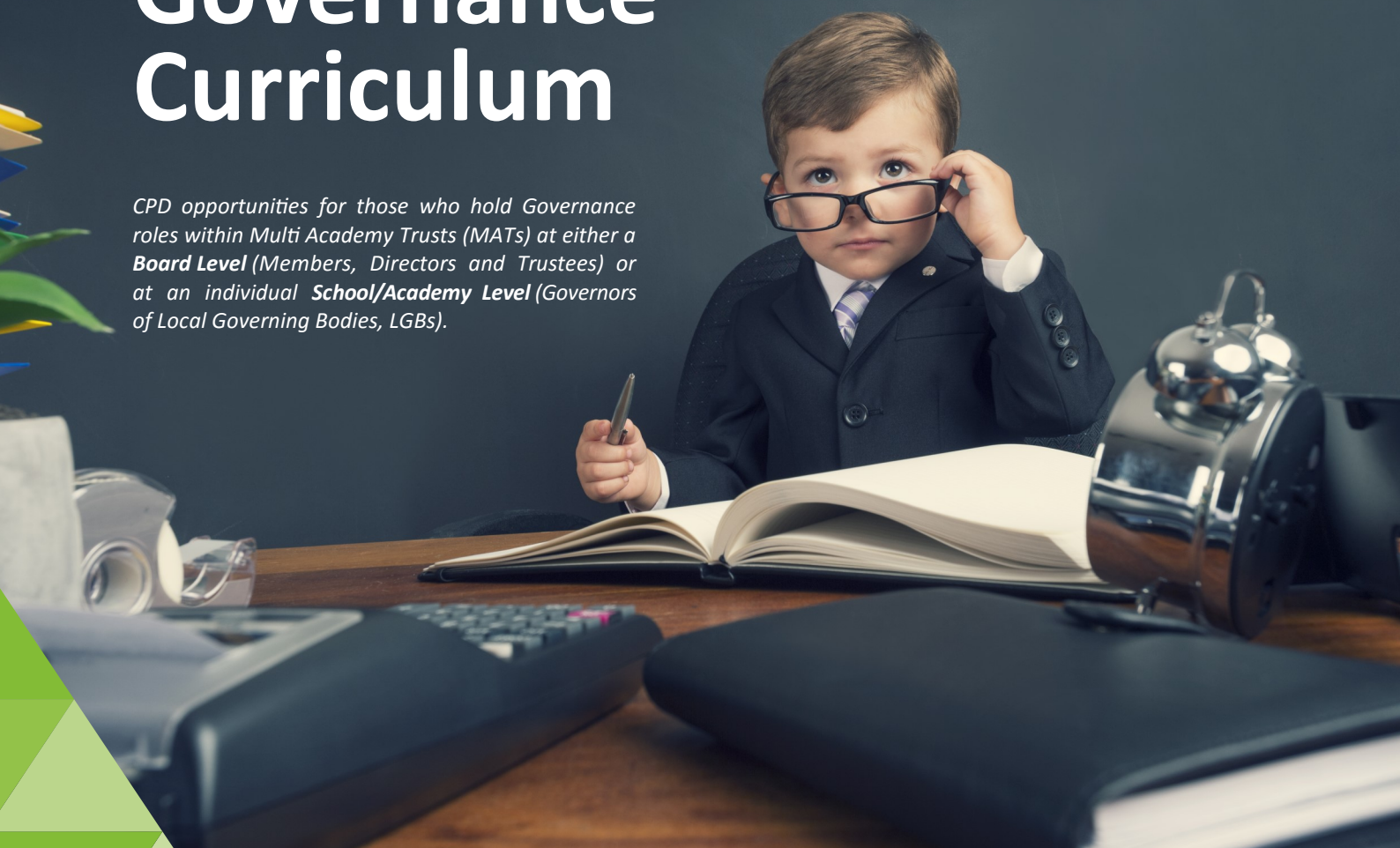


# Governance Curriculum

New for 2019-20!

CPD opportunities for those who hold Governance roles within Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) at either a **Board Level** (Members, Directors and Trustees) or at an individual **School/Academy Level** (Governors of Local Governing Bodies, LGBs).



"The department's vision is to see robust and effective governance in every school and trust. As the first line of accountability, the department recognises that high quality effective and ethical governance is key to success in our school system and for the future of children and young people." *Lord Agnew.*

With over 1,200 Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) across the country and increasing numbers of children and young people being educated within a MAT structure, MATs are a significant part of the educational landscape. However, it is a critical time for MATs and the stakes are high. Many of the initial approaches, structures and models no longer meet current sector challenges nor do they satisfy reformed accountability measures. Furthermore, as well as having to ensure legal and financial compliance whilst maintaining a healthy balance between academic performance and external growth pressures, many MATs are simultaneously entering into their first wave of CEO recruitment, appointment and induction. For a range of reasons, many are also at a point where it is appropriate to review their Schemes of Delegation as they consider the relationship and connectivity between the MAT Board and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) in more detail. As a result, we are entering a new phase of MAT governance and leadership which requires a revised approach to professional development and necessitates a reformed offer.

The Learners First MAT Governance Curriculum offer has therefore been developed by a group of experienced professionals from a range of backgrounds with a wealth of pertinent knowledge, skills and expertise in the field. As well as colleagues with experience of working for and advising the DfE the team has included experienced School Leaders, MAT Directors and Members, Chairs of Trust Boards, National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) and Chairs of Governors. In addition, it has been a privilege to work with a Regional Advisor from Academy Ambassadors who has helped further refine and quality assure the provision. The curriculum has been designed for those who have strategic governance roles on Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Boards and MAT central teams and those on the LGBs of schools operating within MAT organisations. Further details are available overleaf and are outlined in full on the Learners First website.

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## The Curriculum

Keynote addresses from lead professionals within and beyond education, research papers, facilitated discussions and high quality networking opportunities will be key features of the sessions to professionally support and challenge those undertaking governance roles within MATs and academies operating within MAT structures to undertake their duties.

The MAT Governance Curriculum offers an exceptional professional development opportunity designed to support those involved in MAT and Academy governance in any phase of education to:

- Reflect upon their own leadership and governance challenges in order to further develop essential skills and sector related knowledge to successfully perform their duties;
- Be better prepared to challenge and support at a strategic level to help deliver continuous improvement and legal compliance across their MAT, recognising the increasing complexity and change within the education system;
- Analyse strategy and emerging practice in other sectors as well as within the education sector to influence and bring about improvements;
- Connect to both local and national networks that will sustain and continue to develop high quality MAT governance.

## Audience

All sessions have been designed for those who currently hold positions on **MAT Trust Boards** as well as for those who hold governance roles on the **Local Governing Bodies (LGB)** of schools/academies within MATs. Ideally, representatives from both layers of governance within the same Trust will access the Curriculum simultaneously. This approach aims to:

- Support networking opportunities between MAT Boards and Local Governing Bodies within the Trust;
- Promote opportunities for improved communication and links to develop between the layers of governance;
- Increase awareness and a deeper understanding of the MAT governance roles, remits and responsibilities.

In order to ensure the sessions remain relevant and are appropriate for both audiences, each one has been designed to include joint activities/keynote addresses followed by role specific activities, discussion and networking opportunities. Ideally, both Local Governors and Board members associated with the same Trust will attend the sessions. Some sessions may also be applicable to CEOs, CFOs, COOs and Clerks.

## Curriculum Overview

The interdependent sessions have been designed so they can either be accessed by an individual as a 'programme' or as independent events. Alternatively, the sessions could be allocated across a Trust Board or a Governing Body as part of a collective or shared approach.

The Learners First MAT Governance Curriculum offers a comprehensive suite of opportunities built around five core sessions, each lasting between 2-3 hours. These are focused on the following areas:

- **Session1: Strategic Vision and Values**  
*'Aligning Business with a Public Service'*  
*Audience: Members, Directors, CEOs, LGB Governors*
- **Session 2: Teaching & Curriculum Excellence**  
*'The Business of Education'*  
*Audience: Members, Directors, Standards/Performance Committee*
- **Session 3: Financial Oversight, Managing Risk and Resource**  
*'Managing the Business'*  
*Audience: Members, Directors, CEOs, LGB Governors*
- **Session 4: Holding Executive & Other Leaders to Account**  
*'Managing the Business Leaders'*  
*Audience: Members, Directors, LGB Governors, Personnel Committee*
- **Session 5: Collaboration and Partnerships: Stakeholder Voice**  
*'Increasing the Capacity of the Business'*  
*Audience: Members, Directors, LGB Governors*

Central concepts and key areas will be referenced throughout the sessions which will draw upon current educational themes, policy and content. There will be deliberate synergy between this and the DfE accredited National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL).

There is no formal assessment associated with the Learners First MAT Governance Curriculum sessions but participants will be expected to actively engage with some pre and post sessional activities, such as reading and gap tasks, to get the most from the programme.

## Application Process

Applications and bookings can be made by emailing: [teachingschool@learnersfirst.org](mailto:teachingschool@learnersfirst.org). The website also contains full programme details and information about the date, time and venue of each session.

## Cost

For any participants from schools or academies subscribing to Learners First these costs will be met in full.

Alternatively, the cost of the MAT Governance Curriculum is:

- £60 per participant per individual session
- £250 per participant for the full curriculum (all 5 sessions)
- £400 per MAT (unlimited number of delegates at all sessions)

If you would like to know more about the benefits and costs of subscription please visit [www.learnersfirst.net](http://www.learnersfirst.net)

# Overview of Each Session

The Learners First MAT Governance Curriculum has been designed to be both practical and pragmatic with opportunities to work with experienced professionals within and beyond education. It incorporates the following five sessions through which the participants will be professionally encouraged, supported and challenged to consider a range of pertinent areas.

Throughout the sessions participants will be introduced to a range of professionals through focussed inputs, current research and case studies. Through the collaboration with Academy Ambassadors, the latter will include both national and regional figures as well as inputs from local organisations. All sessions will take place in the evenings, typically between 5.30 and 7.30pm.

## Session 1: Strategic Vision & Values

*'Aligning Business with a Public Service'*

*Audience: Members, Directors, CEOs, LGB Governors*

This opening session will cover the fundamentals of Trust and Academy Governance and outline the importance of strong governance, including:

- the relationship, and difference, between vision and values;
- the current and emerging educational landscape and how we can learn from previous system failings;
- the importance of the Nolan Principles and how these can be upheld; and
- how to begin to identify likely changes and anticipate their impact.

This session will be supported by a **keynote address** from **John Edwards**, Regional Schools Commissioner for East Midlands and the Humber.

## Session 2: Teaching & Curriculum Excellence

*'The Business of Education'*

*Audience: Members, Directors, Standards/Performance Committee*

This session is designed to support participants to better understand academic performance metrics, measures and associated accountabilities to be able to answer the question of, 'how well are you doing as a Trust/Academy and how do you know?'. The session will make reference to the use of Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP), the use of appraisal and consider the role of external validation and challenge.

## Session 3: Financial Oversight, Managing Risk & Resources

*'Managing the Business'*

*Audience: Members, Directors, CEOs, LGB Governors*

Allocating scarce resources in order to realise the strategic vision and deliver teaching and curriculum excellence are key themes explored throughout this session. Participants will be supported to consider the strategic deployment of resources; how to scope, mitigate and manage risk; explore the role of the Audit Committee; and how to use and understand business development strategies. Participants will review the current regulatory and statutory requirements in considering their approach to deploying, allocating and utilising their own resources, funding and assets with reference to the Financial Handbook, EFSA expectations and audit requirements.

## Session 4: Holding Executive and Other Leaders to Account

*'Managing the Business Leaders'*

*Audience: Members, Directors, LGB Governors, Personnel Committee*

This session will explore the roles, remits and responsibilities for which executive and senior leaders in MATs and academies are accountable, including and how this is managed, validated and supported by robust governance arrangements. In doing so, it aims to support participants to determine the 'value added' by executive leaders within the organisation, including the CEO and lead professionals. Participants will consider the role of appraisal and performance management, the use of external validation and scrutiny and succession planning arrangements in the context of how they can effectively hold those with responsibility for the management of performance and resource management to account.

## Session 5: Collaboration and Partnerships: Ensuring Stakeholder Voice

*'Increasing the Capacity of the Business'*

*Audience: Members, Directors, LGB Governors*

During this session, participants will be supported and professionally challenged to consider their organisation's responsiveness and resilience to change. This will include looking beyond the educational system to identify how best practice from beyond the education sector can inform and influence MATs and academies. The use of partnerships, collaborations and effective stakeholder engagement to build capacity and drive improvement in a range of areas are central themes in this session.

Schemes of delegation will be considered and potential sources of capacity and connectivity from the wider system (including Teaching Schools) will be considered.



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