



# HCR Quality Assurance of Governance in Academy Trusts

## Strong governance is the foundation of successful academy trusts.

Trustees and governors play a critical role in safeguarding an academy trust's vision, values, and compliance. But how often do governing bodies pause to assure the quality of their own governance arrangements?

### Why quality assure governance?

Governance quality assurance (GQA) helps boards understand whether they are operating effectively, meeting their legal duties, and providing the strategic oversight required of them. As academy trusts become more complex, governance needs to be simplified and focussed on risk and opportunity. Fundamentally, academy trusts need to know whether their governance structures are fit for purpose and delivering the best governance outcomes.

### What governance quality assurance involves

Our governance quality assurance process is a structured review designed around five key areas:

1. **Clarity of purpose** – evaluating whether an academy trust's vision and strategy are well articulated and understood.
2. **Compliance and risk oversight** – assessing how trustees discharge their legal responsibilities.
3. **Board composition and functioning** – reviewing skills, structure, diversity, and decision-making processes.
4. **Leadership and accountability** – examining the relationship between trustees, the CEO, and senior leaders.
5. **Impact and improvement** – identifying how governance adds measurable value to the school community.

Our team of specialist, experienced experts review each area through document analysis, confidential interviews, and benchmarking against regulatory expectations and sector norms.

### The benefits

A governance quality assurance review provides:

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- **Independent validation** of governance strengths and areas for development.
- **Clear recommendations** to enhance board effectiveness and regulatory compliance.
- **Evidence for inspectors** demonstrating proactive oversight and self-evaluation.
- **Increased confidence** for trustees, staff, and parents that the academy trust's governance is fit for purpose.

It's not an audit or inspection — it's a **collaborative diagnostic** tool offering constructive challenge and practical solutions.

## Supporting better decisions

Just as due diligence underpins sound financial and operational choices, governance assurance enables boards to make **timely, strategic and informed decisions** about the future of their academy trust. It ensures that governance is not just compliant, but capable, allowing boards to **anticipate challenges, adapt strategically**, and **sustain excellence**.

## Find out more

If your academy trust board is ready to strengthen its governance foundations, contact us to discuss the Governance Quality Assurance process and indicative costs.

## Key contacts



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