

FAQs - about the role of being a Member

- ***I know nothing about the education sector. How can I find out more?***

Government departments and funding agencies:

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) – for funding and regulation
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency>

Department for Education (DfE) – for policy and general information
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

Standards

Ofsted (Office of Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) – Her Majesty's Inspectorate, an independent body responsible for inspection reports for all schools and colleges <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

Harbour Learning Trust
<https://harbourlearningtrust.com/>

Our leader of governance will also be able to provide additional material and information to help you to get to know the trust and our academies.

- ***In what ways will I get involved in the management of the trust and its academies?***

Members play a limited but crucial role in safeguarding academy trust governance. While they must ensure they do not stray into undertaking the academy trustees' role, they should assure themselves that the governance of the academy trust is effective, that academy trustees are acting in accordance with the trust's charitable object(s) and that they, the Members, use their powers to step in if governance is failing.

As a Member you should not be involved in the day-to-day business of the academy trust. Members have a general duty to exercise their powers to further the academy trust's charitable objective, which in the majority of trusts is 'to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom'.

- ***What sort of training should I expect and who will organise this?***

All new Members will receive an induction to give them the basic tools and information so they can commence the role. The Governance Professional will organise your training.

- ***My partner works for an audit firm which occasionally does work for the school. Should I tell the trust about this?***

All Members are required on appointment to declare any interests that may potentially conflict with their role as a Member and the interests of the trust. These are often financial interests but can also include membership of or connections with other organisations or interest groups. The register of conflicts of interests covers your close relatives, including your partner. The acid test is whether the other interest might compromise your independent judgement. Once an interest is declared, the trust will decide whether you will need to withdraw from consideration of any item where a conflict might occur.