



Governance Professional

Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Liaising with:	Trust Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Head Teachers, other colleagues, Trustees, and Governors
Grade/Salary:	Grade 10 - Scp34 £45,091.00
Hours of work:	37 Hours per week all year round (flexibility is potentially available for term time + contract)
Location:	Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust Offices, Davis Road Willenhall, WV12 5HA

Role purpose

To oversee all aspects of governance effectiveness and compliance within the trust, ensure governance adheres to good practice and meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, and provide strategic leadership of services that support governance across the trust.

- supporting the efficient and effective operation of the trust board and its committees
- ensuring governance at all levels is carrying out its functions
- leading on development of the trust's governance framework and driving improvements to its systems, processes and structures
- managing and coordinating the delivery and ongoing improvement of governance support across the trust

Strategic leadership across schools

Leading governance services

- work with executives, strategic and operational leads to ensure support for governance is compliant, effective and contributes towards strategic priorities being met



- act as the lead adviser on issues relating to the governance of schools and or the trust
- developing and implementing the MAT's strategy for effective governance support services
- managing a budget
- designing and monitoring the governance support structure
- assessing capacity and developing the structure in line with organisational growth
- ensuring effective communications are maintained with governing boards, governance professionals and stakeholders such as the DfE
- writing and presenting training and briefings

Lead adviser for issues relating to governance of MATs

As well as acting as the main point of contact for queries relating to governance within the trust, the lead governance professional proactively updates those governing by providing advice and guidance on:

- complex, technical issues that relate to governing structures, procedures and the legal framework that underpins them
- quality assuring governance advice given by others ensuring that it is informed by an intelligent assessment of risk
- risk informed assessments of options for support and interventions to strengthen governance
- high level issue resolution
- highlighting evidenced based best practice, policy and thought leadership in school governance
- carrying out the duties of a company secretary (see below)

Developing governance

The lead governance professional will clerk meetings of the trust board and its committees, ensuring these enable the successful delivery of strategic objectives. As such, they have a key role in:

- keeping the board focused on its core strategic priorities, their strategic leadership responsibilities and their duty to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct and ethics
- setting the cycle of trust board and committee meetings and preparing focused agendas
- ensuring all meetings are inclusive and well structured
- satisfying all aspects of meeting compliance as stipulated in the trust's articles of association and the Academy Trust Handbook, and in accordance with arrangements agreed by the board



- developing governing structures, particularly in relation to committee structures and the scheme of delegation, and routines across schools (hubs, locality models etc.) and monitoring effectiveness
- ensuring governing structures are developed in parallel with organisational growth strategies
- developing, reviewing and maintaining governance documents, such as articles of association, schemes of delegation, terms of reference, role descriptions and code of conduct
- developing record management and communication methods that are fit for purpose and maintain confidentiality
- overseeing a strategy and protocol for recruiting governors and trustees that ensures the board and its committees are properly constituted, inclusive, diverse and meet the needs of the organisation
- leading on the strategy and planning of governance induction and CPD
- developing and overseeing systems for board self-evaluation and review, including commissioning of external reviews

Leading on compliance

The lead governance professional will manage information and documentation that clearly details the trust's governance arrangements and satisfies other statutory requirements, including (but not limited to):

- maintaining appropriate records of trust board and academy committee membership, along with any terms of reference
- maintaining a trust policy register and advising on the policy review and approval cycle
- ensuring copies of statutory policies and other statutory documents such as the scheme of delegation and register of interests are published as agreed (on the trust and/or academy website) and in line with statutory requirements
- ensuring that governance-specific risks are included in the trust's risk register
- supporting production of the annual report and governance statement published with the trust's annual accounts
- managing the flow of information between the trust board and academy committees and members, maintaining an up-to-date record of academy committee business
- developing trust-specific documents such as a governance code of conduct and skills matrix
- maintaining the trust's online governance portal or equivalent
- the application of policies, procedures, and relevant legislation/guidance across the trust



Policy & Compliance

Maintain and manage the Trust's **policy framework**, ensuring all statutory and non-statutory policies are:

- Reviewed in line with agreed cycles
- Compliant with current DfE, ESFA and legal requirements
- Clearly owned and approved through appropriate governance structures

Lead on the **development, drafting and revision of Trust-wide policies**, working with senior leaders to ensure policies are:

- Clear, compliant and proportionate
- Consistent across all academies
- Aligned with the Trust's values and strategic priorities

Maintain a **central policy register and review tracker**, providing assurance to trustees that:

- Policies are current and fit for purpose
- Review and approval deadlines are met
- Risks arising from policy non-compliance are identified and escalated

Monitor changes in **DfE guidance, statutory frameworks and regulatory expectations**, advising senior leaders and trustees on implications for Trust policies and governance Practice.

Ensure policies are effectively implemented and communicated, supporting academies to understand and apply Trust requirements.

Leadership management

- overseeing recruitment and induction of the governance support team/clerks
- briefing and training staff



- conducting performance management and appraisals
- succession planning for different roles in the structure
- managing any budget and resources allocated to the governance support function

Maintaining relationships and communication

The lead governance professional will develop and maintain productive working relationships while maintaining independence by:

- working collaboratively and holistically with stakeholders in and outside of the organisation so that governance supports and enables the operational delivery of strategic objectives
- ensuring relevant authorities are notified of changes to membership and governance structures as appropriate
- being a role model for effective and ethical governance

Providing coordinated support

Acting as a central point of contact

- providing advisory support to boards
- being an expert resource for clerks and the wider organisation
- quality assuring advice – acting as a high level resource
- responding to issues including concerns and complaints related to governance
- facilitating networks and communication between governing boards

Delivering wider and targeted support

- overseeing recruitment, election/appointment and induction for different governance tiers
- overseeing a CPD offer/development programme
- organising reviews and self-evaluation
- presenting training, briefings and at events
- organising targeted support and intervention when circumstances require

Compliance monitoring across a group of schools

- maintaining a central records system to include attendance at meetings and training sessions by members, directors, governors, trustees and governance professionals



- routine reporting, such as regarding board vacancies
- ensuring different tiers of governance are properly constituted
- monitoring compliance with schemes of delegation
- ensuring systems and controls are in place to comply with obligations under education legislation, funding agreements, charity legislation, company law, data protection legislation, safeguarding guidelines and health and safety legislation

Personal development

The clerking competency framework supports individuals in assessing their own practice, skills and knowledge and identifying their development needs. Continuing professional development in the role of lead governance professional should include:

- liaising with relevant professional organisations and networks
- undertaking regular training including the pursuit of professionally recognised qualifications
- keeping abreast of policy developments affecting academy trust governance
- participating in regular performance management, led by the chair of the board of trustees

Carrying out the duties of a company secretary

- advising the board of trustees on their role, constitutional and procedural matters
- maintaining statutory registers
- ensuring compliance with Companies House annual filing requirements

Person specification:

Knowledge

- extensive knowledge of the academies system
- extensive knowledge of governance law, structures, policy and practice in all types of state school
- awareness of current issues and thought leadership relating to the governance of schools and academy trusts
- understanding of charity law and governance in other sectors



Skills

- high level communication and IT
- high level strategic planning
- decision-making based on intelligent assessment of risk and benefits
- commercial acumen
- interpersonal/relationship building/stakeholder engagement skills
- leadership and line management: planning and coordinating the work of others

Attributes

- personal integrity and commitment
- respecting confidentiality
- confidence and influence as a senior leader
- can manage and make decisions independently
- ability to lead by example, coach, motivate and inspire others
- agile thinker
- innovator
- calm and resilient under pressure
- commitment to CPD and modelling this to others

Qualifications and Experience

- Level 4 certificate in Academy governance or be working towards or a postgraduate (degree level) governance qualification
- Experience working in a senior governance/operations role and relevant experience within an education or service (such as legal, commercial or charity) environment.

Other Tasks:

- To attend meetings as required, which at times may involve travel to Academy sites within the trust.
- To take action to improve outcomes for young people to support all academies in the Trust to be outstanding.



- To perform any task or duty under the reasonable direction of senior staff within the Multi-Academy Trust.

The Lighthouse Multi-Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to satisfactory references, which will be requested, prior to interview, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, medical check, evidence of qualifications plus verification of the right to work in the UK.

The Trust will endeavour to make any necessary reasonable adjustments to the job and the working environment to enable access to employment opportunities for disabled job applicants or continued employment for any employee who develops a disabling condition.

Whilst every effort has been made to outline the key duties and responsibilities of the role, it is not an exhaustive list. The duties and responsibilities of the role may vary from time to time, commensurate with and without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed and would not in itself justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.