

# Application to convert to an academy

Please complete this form if you are a local authority maintained school or schools that want to apply to become an academy. If you are applying in a group of more than three schools, you only need to complete sections 4 and 5 once.

*Please note that information provided on this application form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.*

## 1. Your application

Please see the [notes](#_1._Your_application) for further information on how to complete this part of the form.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Please mark with an X to tell us what you are applying for: | Join a multi-academy trust | Form a new multi-academy trust | Form a new single academy trust |
|  |  |  |
| If you are joining an existing multi-academy trust, please give the name of the trust that your school is joining and provide evidence that they have resolved to accept you.  | Name of trust: Please confirm whether the trust has consented to your school joining them: **Yes/No** |
| If you are forming a new multi-academy trust, please give the name of the proposed trust (if known). | Name of trust: |
| If you are applying to set up a single academy trust, please state the name of the school(s) you will be supporting and the support you will be providing. | Name:Support:  |

### Academy sponsor application

If you are interested in applying to become an academy sponsor please see the information in the supporting [notes](#_1c._Applying_to) at the end of this form, and on the academy sponsor [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sponsor-an-academy).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Are you applying to become an academy sponsor at the same time you are applying to form an academy trust:  | **Yes** | **No** |
|  |  |
| If so, have you already contacted your Regional Schools Commissioner to start that process? | **Yes**  | **No** |
|  |  |

## 2. Basic details

This section must be completed for each school applying to form or join the multi-academy trust *(please submit a second form for additional schools.)* However, please see the notes section if any of the schools are special schools or Pupil Referral Units.If you are applying to convert as a single academy trust, please complete column marked as *School A* only.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **School A** | **School B** | **School C** |
| FULL school name and postal address: |  |  |  |
| LA/ESTAB number: |  |  |  |
| School URN: |  |  |  |
| Name of headteacher: |  |  |  |
| Headteacher email address: |  |  |  |
| Telephone number: |  |  |  |
| Name of chair of existing governing body: |  |  |  |
| Chair’s email address: |  |  |  |
| Chair’s telephone number: |  |  |  |
| Main contact for the conversion process. If not one of the above, include role, email address and telephone number. (*It would be helpful, though not essential, to have a single point of contact who can act on behalf of all of the schools.)* |  |

## 3. Conversion date

More information on [opening dates](#_3._Conversion_date) can be found in the notes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The conversion date for each school applying will be scheduled for approximately five months from the 1st of the month following the month in which you apply.*If you are applying to form a MAT, or to become an academy sponsor, it is preferable and can be beneficial for all schools to convert together, but this can be flexible to meet circumstances that may arise during the conversion project If you wish to convert on a different date, please give the date and your reasons.* | Please let us know if you want to open on a different date, and explain why you want to open on this date.  |

## 4. Academy Trust: governance structure and key people

This section need only be completed once where more than one school is applying to form a new multi-academy trust. Please see the [notes](#_4._Trust_governance) for more information on how to complete this section.

If you are joining an open academy trust, you do not need to tell us about the current members or trustees of the trust. You should tell us if there are going to be any changes to the current members or trustees, for example, if there are going to be new trustees as a result of your school(s) joining the trust. You should also tell us what the arrangements will be for local governing bodies in the schools that are joining any open trust.

If you are applying to become an academy sponsor, please do not complete this section of the form. You should include this information in the sponsor application form.

### Governance structure

|  |
| --- |
| ***This section is to ensure that there will be a clear governance structure for the academy trust and that the individuals within it will have the knowledge, skills and experience, as well as the capacity and commitment, to deliver effective governance. Information regarding this requirement is defined in the Governance Handbook and Competency Framework for Governance, which can be downloaded from*** [***https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook***](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook)***Effective governance is based on 6 key features:*** * ***Strategic leadership*** *that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy*
* ***Accountability*** *that drives up educational standards and financial performance*
* ***People*** *with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity*
* ***Structures*** *that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities*
* ***Compliance*** *with statutory and contractual requirements*
* ***Evaluation*** *to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance*

***Key points to consider:*** Individuals who will act as members and trustees of the proposed academy trust, as well as the individuals associated with it, will be required to uphold the [seven principles of public life](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life) (selflessness, objectivity, integrity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.)***Members**** *The MATs: Good Practice Guidance and Expectations for Growth* [*https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-academy-trusts-establishing-and-developing-your-trust*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-academy-trusts-establishing-and-developing-your-trust) *states that trusts must have at least 3 members, although the department’s strong preference is for at least 5 members. This provides for a diverse range of perspectives, robust decision making and reduces the risks of concentrating power. It also ensures that members can take decisions via special resolution without requiring unanimity.*
* *Employees of the proposed or existing academy trust cannot be members of the trust (Governance Handbook Section 5, paragraph 24.)*
* *The Governance Handbook states that the majority of members are to be independent of the board of trustees (Governance Handbook Section 5, paragraph 28). Ensuring a significant degree of distinction between the individuals who are members and those who are trustees provides for more robust oversight of the board.*
* *Ensure LA-associated persons (Governance Handbook Section 5, paragraph 16) make up no more than 19.9% of the members.*
* *The total number of members shall comprise of a majority of UK based individuals who shall have relevant UK educational expertise including experience of school improvement.*

***Trustees**** *The board of trustees manages the business of the academy trust and is responsible for the trust’s accountability to Parliament and to the Secretary of State as the Principal Regulator of academy trusts as exempt charities. The board should have the necessary expertise and capacity to undertake its three core functions of ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.*
* *Trustees should have a range of expertise, such as business, commercial, finance, legal, education, governance and HR. Where there is a gap in required skills, the board should ensure that this is addressed through recruitment, induction or training and how it will be sourced e.g. through Academy Ambassadors and/or Inspiring Governance.*
* *The academy trust articles of association prevent more than one third of the total number of trustees being employees. The Governance Handbook sets an expectation that the CEO/Principal is the only trust employee who is a trustee (Governance Handbook Section 5, paragraph 17.)*
* *The articles of association also require that Local Authority associated persons (Governance Handbook Section 5, paragraph 16) make up no more than 19.9% of the trustees.*
* *The board of trustees is responsible for the proper stewardship of public funds, including regularity and propriety, and for ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use – three key elements of value for money.*
* *The board of trustees of the academy trust must appoint, in writing, a named individual who is both the senior executive leader and Accounting Officer. In multi-academy trusts, this should be the chief executive or equivalent.*
 |
| **Please attach an A4 diagram showing the proposed structure of your academy trust. This diagram must clearly show the lines of accountability between the trust and the academies that would join the trust, in order to show how the trust will hold each academy to account. Use accompanying text where necessary to explain the detail.** **If you are joining an open trust, use this section to explain what local governing body arrangements will be for the schools that are joining, and how they will fit into the existing lines of accountability within the trust.** Guidance on MAT structures is set out in the Governance Handbook, which can be downloaded from this page <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook> You can find examples of governance structures in MATS: Good Practice Guidance and Expectations for Growth[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-academy-trusts-establishing-and-developing-your-trust](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-academy-trusts-establishing-and-developing-your-trust%20) |

#### Key people

Using the table below, please provide a brief biography for each of the persons fulfilling the specific roles outlined below, to demonstrate relevant experience in the key areas of: leadership; education improvement; finance; business; HR and data handling. The Academies Financial Handbook places requirements on all of these roles.

You should download a copy of the Academies Financial Handbook to find out more about these requirements <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook>

If any of these people have previously been a head teacher, please give the name of their most recent school, the dates of their headship and their school performance data.

* The senior executive leader/CEO of the trust, including their qualifications and experience for that role.
* The finance director, including their qualifications and experience for that role and how much time they expect to be able to give initially.
* The members of the trust who are signatories to the articles of association and who have a similar role to shareholders in a company limited by shares.
* The trustees who manage the business of the academy trust.
* Other key partner organisations and individuals with whom the trust would work.

|  |
| --- |
| **Governance Structure Overview** |
| * Number of members
* Number of trustees
* Executive leadership team
* Local Governing Bodies (LGBs), other committees
 |
| **Key Person Profile** |
| **Name** | **D.O.B.** | **Address** | **Position within the Trust (tick all that apply)** | **Has the individual consented to take up this position?** | **Current responsibilities** Employment/ self-employment/other non-exec roles | **Current employer (company number)** | **Primary area of expertise**e.g. finance, marketing, education, HR | **Associated companies/ previous employers** | **Biography**Demonstrate relevant experience and expertise (max 250 words) –annex if necessary  |
|  |  |  | [ ] Member[ ] Trustee[ ]  CEO/ executive headteacher [ ] Chair of trust [ ] Finance director[ ] Other: | [ ] Yes[ ] No |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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## 5. Multi-academy trust (MAT) overview

This section need only be completed once where more than one school is applying to form a new multi-academy trust. Please see the [notes](#_5._Multi-academy_trust) for more information on how to complete this section.

If you are applying to become an academy sponsor, please do not complete this section of the form. You should include this information in the sponsor application form.

|  |
| --- |
| **Expand this section to include the following (max. of 500 words):*** *When you plan to open* *your new multi-academy trust.*
* *The rationale for the schools forming an academy trust together (e.g. building on existing links, benefits to be gained.)*
* *The agreed vision and aspirations of your multi-academy trust.*
* *The geographical areas and communities that you will serve.*
* *Your proposals to maximise the freedoms that academy status offers.*
* *Your intended approach to working in partnership to improve teaching and learning within the trust and potentially to support other schools.*

***Plans for growth**** *Your plans over the next five years for how many schools you hope will join your trust, the geographical area you intend your trust to eventually cover, and how this growth will be managed and sustained.*

***School improvement strategy**** *What are your plans for support and improvement of the academies within your multi-academy trust? Please include details of where this capacity will come from and how will you monitor it.*
* *How will you ensure that your strategy is fit for purpose and drives up standards across the MAT?*
* *If the trust aspires to become an approved sponsor, what timescale do you have in mind?*
 |

## 6. Finances

This section must be completed for **each school**. Please insert additional school columns or tables if needed. See the [notes](#_6._Finance) at the end of this form for more information on how to complete this section.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | End of previous financial year (31 March)  | End of current financial year (31 March) | End of next financial year (31 March) |
|  | School A | SchoolB | School C | School A | SchoolB | School C | SchoolA | School B | School C |
| School name |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Expected REVENUE carry forward: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Surplus or (deficit)? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| CAPITAL carry forward: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Surplus or (deficit)? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The information requested below is required **for each school** in this application.

### Decreasing balance:

If any school in this application has a revenue or capital balance which is lower at the end of the next financial year than at the end of the current financial year, please explain the reasons in the box below including any remedial action to be taken.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

If a school in this application has a **deficit**, please explain the reasons why in the box below and any remedial action to be undertaken.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Please note: converting schools should normally be in a surplus or balanced budget position. Schools **may** be permitted to carry forward a deficit but only where there is a clear plan in place to balance the budget with a reasonable timescale. Schools in deficit will be required to provide a forecast showing how this will be achieved within 2-3 years from conversion. The department's preferred format for that information is for income and expenditure to be set out using the [Consistent Financial Reporting](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consistent-financial-reporting-framework-cfr) codes. **Please submit this plan with your application**. Once your application has been submitted, you will be allocated a DfE project lead who will discuss this with you.If your school has a deficit recovery plan agreed with the LA, please send that with your application form.

**Please note that if you are unable to provide the required forecasts or a recovery plan, you may submit the application without it but the information will still be required to secure approval of an academy order and this may result in your approval being delayed.**

|  |
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|  |

### Loans and financial leases:

For each school in this application, please describe any existing loans or financial leases in the box below as follows:

1. loan provider, total amount, schedule of repayments and interest rates
2. lessor with details of arrangement, timescale and charges
3. purpose of loan and/or financial lease.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

### School capacity and pupil numbers on roll:

For each school in this application, please state the school’s capacity (LA net capacity assessment), and provide a three-year projection of pupil numbers. Please also explain what this information is based upon (i.e. what assumptions are you making.)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **School A**  | **School B** | **School C** |
| School capacity (the number of pupils the school can physically accommodate): |  |  |  |
| Projected pupil numbers on roll in the year the academy opens (year 1): |  |  |  |
| Projected pupil numbers on roll in the following year after the academy has opened (year 2):  |  |  |  |
| Projected pupil numbers on roll in the following year (year 3):  |  |  |  |
| The assumptions underlying your projections of pupil numbers on roll: |  |  |  |

## 7. Additional information

This information is required **for each school** in this application – please complete [Annex A](#_Annex_A:_Additional) below. Please see the [notes](#_7._Additional_information) for further information on how to complete Annex A.

## 8. Academy conversion support grant

If you are applying to form a new multi-academy trust **you must complete this section for each school.** Please also see the [notes](#_8._Academy_conversion) for further information on how to complete this section of the form.

Please complete the form with the school’s bank account into which your £25,000 support grant should be paid following the award of an academy order. To claim this grant, you must agree to the terms of the support grant as set out in the support grant certificate available on the GOV.UK website [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256036/support_grant_claim_form.doc). Please indicate you have read and agree to the terms by putting a cross in the box below (claims that do not include this will not be processed and you will not be paid).

#### School A

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I confirm I wish to claim the £25,000 support grant and I agree to be bound by the terms of the support grant certificate. | YES | NO |
|  |  |
| Name of bank: |
| Bank branch address: |
| Bank account name: |
| Sort code: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Account number: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

#### School B

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I confirm I wish to claim the £25,000 support grant and I agree to be bound by the terms of the support grant certificate. | YES | NO |
|  |  |
| Name of bank: |
| Bank branch address: |
| Bank account name: |
| Sort code: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Account number: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

#### School C

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I confirm I wish to claim the £25,000 support grant and I agree to be bound by the terms of the support grant certificate. | YES | NO |
|  |  |
| Name of bank: |
| Bank branch address: |
| Bank account name: |
| Sort code: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Account number: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## 9. Declaration

This section must be completed by ***all*** schools in this application.

By submitting this application we, the governing body of the school(s) named in this application, confirm that:

* we have the authority to resolve that our school should become an academy
* all the information included is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge
* *(if the school is a foundation or voluntary school that has a foundation and there is a diocese, trust, or other body that appoints governors in the school)* the diocese, trust or body that appoints governors and the trustees of the school have separately agreed that we may convert to academy status. (A letter stating this will be sent from that body to the department. Project leads will need to receive this consent letter before our application can be processed)
* a resolution to apply to convert to academy status has been held and carried and a record of this decision is available should departmental officials wish to see it
* *(if the school is part of a federation)* we have complied with the requirements in The School Governance (Federations)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (1554) when passing the resolution to apply to convert to academy status, and a record of the voting is available should departmental officials wish to see it
* we will, in accordance with Section 5 of the Academies Act, consult with any stakeholder we consider relevant to our conversion and also consider any equality needs, and that this consultation will be completed before we sign our funding agreement
* there are no financial or safeguarding investigations ongoing at our school
* we accept that the department may ask for any additional information as they see fit to assess our application and that as a condition of our conversion we shall provide it
* should any information presented in this application be revealed to be false or misleading, we understand that our application may be rejected and our academy order potentially rescinded if it has already been awarded.

**School A**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of the chair of governors: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Date: |  |

**School B**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of the chair of governors: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Date: |  |

**School C**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of the chair of governors: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Date: |  |

## Next steps

Please email the signed and completed application form(s) (in Word format), together with any letters of consent or other required documents, to the following address: Applications.ACADEMIES@education.gsi.gov.uk

Once your application has been submitted, we will allocate a named DfE project lead who will discuss your application with you.

Your Regional Schools Commissioner, advised by their Headteacher Board, will consider your application in line with the criteria published on [this web page](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools/1-before-you-apply), under the heading *Prepare your application.*  Your Regional Schools Commissioner will then decide whether to issue an Academy Order.

## Annex A: Additional information

Please provide this information **for each school.** Please see the [notes](#_7._Additional_information) for further information on how to complete this part of the form. Your application cannot be assessed without this information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School name: |  |
| Please confirm if the school has recently been inspected by Ofsted but the report has not yet been published. | **Yes/No***If yes, please provide brief details below:*  |
| Is your school part of an LA reorganisation? | **Yes/No** |
| *If yes, please provide brief details below:* |
| Is your school part of any LA closure plans? | **Yes/No** |
| *If yes, please provide brief details below:* |
| Is your school part of a federation (The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012)? | **Yes/No** |
| If the answer is yes, you must ensure that the application for an academy order complies with the [School Governance (Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (1554).](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/487/made) |  |
| Is your school linked to a diocese?  | **Yes/No** |
| Name of diocese, if applicable:***Church schools must have the prior consent of their diocese to apply to convert****. Please send the diocese’s letter of consent with your application form to:* *applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk* |
| Is your school supported by a foundation, trust or other body (e.g. parish council) that appoints foundation governors?  | **Yes/No** |
| *If yes, please give the name of this body/bodies:* (Please provide their letter of consent with your application either by post or to: applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk. We will be unable to progress your application without their consent.) |
| Does your school currently have an exemption, issued by the local Standing Committee on Religious Education (SACRE), from providing broadly Christian collective worship? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, when does the exemption expire?  |  |

### Land and buildings

Please provide this information for each school.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of school |  |
| Who currently owns/holds the school building and associated land? |  |
| Is any part of your school’s facilities used by or shared with organisations other than the school?This could include hire of school hall or playing fields by community groups.  | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please provide below details below of the shared use: |
| Are there any building works ongoing or planned at the school? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please provide details below of what is being done, the scheduled completion date and whether the arrangements for funding will be affected by conversion: |
| Is there a nursery, children’s centre, swimming pool, leisure centre, caretaker’s house, community library or any other shared facility on site? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please state below what, and whether the school has any proposals to retain (or acquire) the facility as part of the conversion process: |
| Has your school been in receipt of any grants from Sport England, The Big Lottery Fund, or the Football Federation? | **Yes/No**  |
| If yes, please state below which body awarded the grant(s), how much they were for and what facilities were funded: |
| Is your school part of a PFI scheme? | **Yes/No** |
| Is your school part of the Priority School Building Programme? | **Yes/No** |
| Is your school part of the Building Schools for the Future programme?  | **Yes/No** |

### Consultation

This section must be completed by each school.

|  |
| --- |
| Name of school: |
| The governing body has discussed the statutory consultation exercise and considered its equality assessment needs.We will require confirmation that the governing body has considered what plans it has for the statutory consultation exercise and any equality impact assessment. Your project lead will contact you to discuss this.  | **Yes/No****Yes/No** |
| Please provide below any other information you think may be significant for the school’s conversion to academy status:  |
| What prompted you to apply for academy status? Please tick any that apply. |
| Information at a FASNA/SSAT Event:  |  |
| Another academy or academy sponsor:  |  |
| The Academies Show:  |  |
| Letter from DfE:  |  |
| A DfE project lead: |  |
| Other – give details below:  |

# Supporting notes for schools to fill in the form

We will automatically generate historic data sets for your school’s performance, including:

* pupil progress, over the last four years from published data;
* and your most recent published Ofsted report.

Your project lead will be in touch to discuss your predictions for your school’s performance for the coming year.

## 1. Your application

There are two types of academy trust:

1. multi-academy trust (MAT) - MATs run more than one academy. The MAT is a charitable company with a single set of articles of association. It is a single legal entity accountable for a number of academies through its board of trustees, who are also directors of the company. The trust enters into a master funding agreement (MFA) with the Secretary of State, and into supplemental funding agreements (SFA) for each academy it operates.
2. single academy trust (SAT) – a SAT is responsible for one academy. It has its own articles of association and funding agreement with the Secretary of State. Its board of trustees is accountable for that one academy only.

We believe all schools, including those performing well, will benefit from being in a MAT. We want schools to operate in strong, resilient structures that raise standards. MATs bring together leadership, autonomy, funding and accountability in a single structure, and are the best long-term formal arrangement for schools to collaborate and support each other. MATs are not confined to schools within a local authority area and may wish to consider the benefits of links across local authority boundaries.

Because of these benefits, we expect that most schools will form or join multi-academy trusts as they become academies. High-performing schools can apply to become single academy trusts, but will need to demonstrate that they can be successful and financially sustainable alone.

### 1a. Multi-academy trust

You can apply to **form a multi-academy** trust with other schools, or join an existing multi-academy trust.

You should include the names of any special schools or Pupil Referral Units that want to form a new multi-academy trust with your school in this form, but they must complete their own application forms, which take account of their own distinct characteristics.

The application form for special schools can be downloaded from this webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-conversion-application-forms>

The application form for Pupil Referral Units can be downloaded from this web page:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision-academy-application-process>

If you are **joining an existing multi-academy trust** you must confirm that the established trust consents to your school joining them. Please send in their letter of consent with your application either by post or via the email address applications.academies@education.gov.uk. We will be unable to progress your application without their consent.

If you are **already a single academy trust** and want to set up a multi–academy trust (MAT), please do not use this form, which is for maintained schools only. Please see the information published on our webpages [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-to-become-a-multi-academy-trust).

**Forming a new trust –** please give the proposed name of the trust and the other schools that intend to join.

**Governance structure** – please give as much information as possible on who the members and trustees are/will be and how it is/will be structured, for example in a diagram. If you are forming the trust with other schools, we recognise that you may not have come to a firm decision on its structure yet, but it will be important to understand your intentions.

If you are joining an open academy trust, you do not need to include information on the current members and trustees. However, you should tell us if there will be any changes to the members, or trustees, as a result of your school(s) joining the trust. Please include information on any individuals who will be joining the trust as members or trustees at this time. You should also include information on what the arrangements will be for local governing bodies in the school(s) that are joining the open trust – for example, will the school have its own governing body, or will it share one with other academies in the trust.

### 1b. Single academy trust

Each application to become a single academy trust will be considered on a case by case basis, with the decision being informed by various factors. These include:

* your school’s exam results from the last 3 years
* the progress your pupils have been making over the last 3 years
* your most recent Ofsted inspections
* your school’s capacity to be successful and sustainable as a single academy
* your school’s finances.

**Supporting another school** - as part of the conversion process, we expect Ofsted rated “outstanding” or “good with outstanding features” schools which convert into a single academy trust to commit to support at least one weaker school in return for academy status.

### 1c. Applying to become an academy sponsor

If you’re interested in becoming an academy sponsor, you should first [contact your RSC](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/schools-commissioners-group) office to discuss your ideas.

If your RSC agrees that you should apply, DfE will nominate a ‘sponsor lead’ to work with you. Your sponsor lead will ask what sort of academy you wish to sponsor so they can advise on the sponsor opportunities in your region. They’ll also ask if you are already working with a particular school that may need a sponsor.

It is possible to apply to form an academy trust at the same time that you apply to become an academy sponsor. You must fill in the separate application form to become an academy sponsor, which you can download from our webpages [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-sponsor-application-form).

However, we will not ask you for the same, or similar, information twice. Please use the sponsor application form to supply information on the trust’s proposed governance structure, the backgrounds of the key people and on the vision and plans of your trust.

You can also find further guidance and help on applying to become an academy sponsor on this webpage [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sponsor-an-academy).

## 2. Basic details

Must be completed for all schools applying to convert to academy status.

### 3. Conversion date

The default conversion date is 5 months from the month of application - a straightforward conversion will take around 5 months to complete. If your school is part of a PFI contract, it may take longer (about 6-9 months.) If you wish to propose an alternative date, please state this on the application and explain the reasons why. Your project lead will discuss this with you in more detail either whilst processing your application or as soon as you gain an academy order.

### 4. Trust governance and key people

Where more than one school is applying to convert to academy status to form a new multi-academy trust, this section need only be completed once.

As part of the conversion process, we will expect your governing body or bodies to consider the governance structure and arrangements of the academy trust. We recognise that your governing body or bodies may not have reached firm decisions on this yet, including the key roles for the trust, and we are interested in their thinking as it develops. Your governing body is not required to commit themselves to plans at this stage but we will need to know the confirmed appointments before a funding agreement can be signed.

Your governors may find it helpful to consult further information on the governance structure of academies and the roles and responsibilities of members and trustees, which can be found here:

* the Governance Handbook, on the GOV.UK site [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governors-handbook--3)
* the Charity Commission website:
	+ [Setting up and running a charity](https://www.gov.uk/topic/running-charity)
	+ [Trustee role and board](https://www.gov.uk/topic/running-charity/trustee-role-board)
* the Academies Financial Handbook, which can be found on the GOV.UK site [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook-2015)
* the Seven Principles of Public Life, which can be found on the GOV.UK site [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life)

**Number of founding members of the trust** - these will be the individuals who will sign the memorandum of association that sets up the academy trust. The members agree the articles of association for the academy trust and hold the board of trustees to account for the management of the trust. The articles define the charitable purpose of the trust and how it will be run. The minimum number of members is three but our strong preference is for five members in order to ensure that the members have the necessary skills and expertise to hold the trustees to account for school leadership/improvement, financial accounting and running a charitable company. An even number is not advisable as this may restrict the ability to reach decisions.

Please give the number of the members of the trust, the number of members who are also trustees, and the number of trustees. The recommended number of trustees is 6-10.

**Academy pay** - academy trusts are free to set their own salaries for staff, but we would expect this to reflect the size and complexity of the trust, as they must deliver value for money. The responsibilities of school leaders have changed significantly in recent years, with many now running several academies in a multi-academy trust.

Trusts must disclose senior staff pay annually in their audited accounts. The ESFA follow up where non-compliance is identified. Disclosure must include:

* the number of employees earning more than £60k, set out in £10k bands.
* the names of all trustees who received remuneration in each band, and the amounts they received. This will consist of the salaries of the principal in a single academy trust and the chief executive in a multi academy trust, unless in the exceptional case they have chosen not to be a trustee.

## 5. Multi-academy trust overview

Where more than one school is applying to convert to academy status to form a new multi-academy trust, this section need only be completed once.

## 6. Finance

**Deficit reduction plan** - if your school has a deficit of more than 3% of its dedicated School Budget Share, we will need to see a copy of any deficit reduction plan that has been agreed with your LA. If one has not yet been agreed, your project lead will be in touch with you to discuss progress.

**School capacity –** this is the school’s net capacity figure (the number of pupils your school is able to accommodate physically on its premises), as assessed periodically by your LA. Please supply the LA’s most recent net capacity assessment.

## 7. Additional information

**Ofsted -** please complete with the overall grade of your last published Ofsted inspection. Your project lead will discuss the report with you. If you have been inspected by Ofsted very recently and the report has not been published, please let us know. Your project lead will discuss this with you.

**Consent of diocese, foundation, trust or other body** – your project lead will need to see evidence of this in order to progress your application. You may send in a copy of their letter of consent electronically via applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk or in hard copy to the department.

**If your school is part of a federation, please confirm that your application for an academy order has complied with** the relevant regulations (The School Governance (Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (1554)).

**Building works, shared use including nurseries, Sport England funding, PFI, BSF and PSBP** - we do not need full information at this early stage, but it is helpful to know whether your school has any of these arrangements as they typically require additional time to deal with. This could affect your scheduled conversion date.

**Any other information** - please add any further information you think would be significant for your school’s application. Your project lead will be in touch to discuss this with you.

You may also send in any further information via applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk to the department.

## 8. Academy conversion support grant

The conditions of the grant are in the academy financial support grant claim form available on the department’s pages on the GOV.UK website [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256036/support_grant_claim_form.doc). When you have converted to academy status you will be required to confirm that the grant has been spent on the specified purposes only. Each school within the new multi-academy trust must complete this part. For ease of reference, the conditions are:

1. Grant may only be used for the following purposes:
	1. obtaining legal advice in respect of the conversion process;
	2. the costs of software licence transfers;
	3. HR/TUPE advice;
	4. re-branding costs; and
	5. expenses incurred in setting up of the academy trust.
2. You should retain records to show that the grant has been used for the purposes outlined in (1) above for 6 years after the end of the financial year in which the expenditure has taken place. The books and records of the school relating to the claiming and use of grant will be open to inspection by the National Audit Office and representatives of the Secretary of State as and when they may require.
3. **Either**

a) In the event of a successful conversion, any unused element of grant should be transferred to the academy trust for the purposes described in its charitable objects, typically the advancement of education. The chair of the governing body will be expected to sign a declaration confirming how much of the grant has been spent at the point of conversion to academy status and, if relevant, how much has been transferred to the academy budget. The chair will send a certificate (which you can download from the DfE pages on GOV.UK [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-support-grant)) to the Secretary of State declaring this and including the exact amounts of grant spent and transferred

**Or**
b) In the event that the conversion does not occur, then any unused grant should be repaid to the Secretary of State within 10 working days of notifying us that you are withdrawing your application to convert.

1. When procuring goods and services for the school or academy, you are reminded of the requirement to comply with EU and UK procurement law and regulations when appropriate.

[The Crescent Purchasing Consortium legal services framework](https://www.thecpc.ac.uk/suppliers/categories/framework.php?categoryID=9&frameworkID=207) is a national deal providing a comprehensive and compliant suite of legal services for the conversion process. This is a best value arrangement that allows schools to request legal services at a competitive price, pre-negotiated by Crescent Purchasing Consortium. A free helpline offering basic legal advice and an online quote tool are some of the features available to support schools when arranging legal services. If your school has specific requirements to meet, then you should run your own mini-competition for legal services.

Please email the completed application form (in Word format) to the following address: applications.academies@education.gov.uk and copy it to your DfE project lead.

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