

# **Associate members of the board FAQs**

An explanation of the regulations surrounding the appointment of associate members of the board

If you have any queries, please contact Governor Services on 0330 0249046 or email [GovernorServices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:GovernorServices@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## 1. What is an associate member of the board?

The definition of associate member is wide. Pupils, school staff and people who want to contribute specifically on issues related to their area of expertise (for instance, finance) can be appointed as associate members.

Associate members are appointed to committees of the board to provide specific skills and expertise. They are *not* governors.

## 2. Why would a board of governors appoint an associate member?

- When a school has no governor vacancies, but is in need of someone with specific skills, an associate member can be appointed.
- A governing board with no vacancies may decide to recruit an associate member as a form of succession planning.
- If the school has a specific short term project, which requires additional expertise, an associate member can be recruited to support that project.

## 3. Who can become an associate member?

Associate members can be pupils, school staff or people who have specific skills or expertise that the board needs. They must meet the same qualification and disqualification criteria [LINK] as governors, although associate members can be under 18.

## 4. What is the difference between associate member and a governor?

- An associate member is not a governor and is not recorded in the instrument of government
- They do not form part of the quorum for full governing board (FGB) meetings
- They do not have a vote at FGB meetings
- Associate members cannot be chair or vice chair of governors, although they can be chair of a committee
- They can be excluded from any part of a meeting where the business being considered concerns a member of school staff or an individual pupil.

## 5. How are associate members appointed?

Associate members are appointed at an FGB meeting by majority vote. Their term of office and voting rights on committees are agreed at this time and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## 6. Voting rights of associate members

Associate members have no voting rights on the full governing board but may vote on any committees to which they have been appointed if they are given voting rights by the FGB **and** the majority of the committee members present are governors, not associate members **and** they are aged over 18.

If a vote is tied in a committee they chair, they cannot have the casting vote.

## 7. Do associate members form part of the quorum at meetings?

- *At FGB:* they may attend, but do not form part of the quorum
- *At Committees:* they do form part of the quorum, so long as more governors than associate members are present

## 8. Term of office

The term of office for an associate member is between one and four years, determined by the FGB at appointment; associate members can be reappointed at the end of their term. They can be removed from office by the board at any time.

## References:

[Governance handbook and competency framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[The constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)