

Foundation Governor Appointment and Reappointment Process (VA, VC & DGET Schools)

N.B. DGET is the Diocese of Gloucester Education Trust. The processes outlined below for DGET are applicable to **all academies except schools in DGAT** (the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust), whose appointment process involves a slightly different application form.

Background

In the Diocese of Gloucester it is the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to nominate suitable individuals to the Gloucester Diocesan Board of Education (GDBE) for consideration for appointment as a foundation governor. Foundation governors have a specific responsibility in law to ensure that the school's Christian character is preserved and developed, but in addition, along with fellow governors, they need the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

What you should do first

Prior to seeking to appoint or reappoint a foundation governor, schools should undertake a skills audit of current governors to identify any potential skills gaps that may need to be filled. The results of the skills audit can then be used to open a dialogue between the school and the PCC about the nomination of future foundation governors and the skills set, knowledge and expertise the school is seeking.

In a maintained school, the Instrument of Government (IOG) details the number of foundation governors a governing body is required to have appointed. This important document is to be found in school and a copy should be kept by the clerk to the governors.

In an academy trust, the number of foundation governors required at trust board or at local governance level is detailed within the trust's Articles of Association. This document is held by the trust and should be available on the trust's website.

Foundation governors are appointed for a four-year term of office, unless the IOG or Articles of Association indicate otherwise, apart from the ex-officio foundation governor who holds the role for as long as they are the local incumbent.

- The GDBE Foundation Governor Appointment Panel **will not approve** the appointment of a foundation governor who has previously been employed at the school within a six-month period prior to a vacancy for a foundation governor arising.
- The GDBE Foundation Governor Appointment Panel **will not appoint** a member of clergy who has recently been employed in the parish within a six-month period prior to a vacancy for a foundation governor arising.

The incumbent or local minister is the ex-officio foundation governor and counts as one of the foundation governors required to be appointed to the governing board. In cases where there is no ex-officio foundation governor, and the possibility of there not being one for some time, or where the incumbent or local minister has more than one Church

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school within their jurisdiction, it is the remit of the appropriate Archdeacon to appoint a replacement, who is known as a substitute ex-officio governor; please see our **Guidance for the Appointment of a Substitute Ex-Officio Foundation Governor** document for further details. If you would like to explore this possibility because of exceptional circumstances, please contact the Diocesan Education Team Principal Advisor for Governance, at schoolsgovernance@glosdioc.org.uk.

The Archdeacon also has the right to the request that the trust board remove an ex-officio foundation governor from office. The process for this is set out in our **Guidance on the Removal of Foundation Governors** document.

The PCC nominates foundation governors. They are appointed and reappointed by the Gloucester Diocesan Board of Education (GDBE). The GDBE delegates this responsibility to an appointment panel.

Appointments and reappointments

The appointment process for a new appointment or reappointment:

1. The PCC secretary (or the clerk to the governors) notifies the Diocesan Principal Advisor for Governance when there is a foundation governor vacancy. The Principal Advisor will also send a reminder letter to the PCC secretary, advising of foundation governors who are due to come to the end of their term of office. This letter is always copied to the clerk to governors.
2. The appointment process involves two “conversations”. The intention of these two conversations is to ensure that the school has the opportunity to share the skills required with the potential governor and PCC, and for the potential governor to understand the commitment involved and to learn more about the school.

Conversation 1

A conversation takes place between the school and the PCC when a foundation governor vacancy arises to:

- Discuss the skills/expertise needed by the school
- Discuss, if appropriate/relevant, whether the current role holder is willing/able to carry on and whether they have the skills etc. needed

Conversation 2.

A conversation takes place between the school, PCC and the individual suggested for nomination to explore:

- The individual’s skills, experience and expertise
- Expectations and responsibilities of the role
- Time commitment
- Training and support available, including from the Diocesan Education Team

N.B. In the case of renewals of applications a review of the training that has been undertaken throughout their previous term of office should be carried out and noted on the form and an undertaking obtained to take up/continue to take up courses regularly.

If all three parties are content then the relevant foundation governor application form (VA & VC, or DGET) is completed – all sections of the application form must be completed. **Digital signatures are permitted.**

The agreement to nominate is then discussed and minuted at a PCC meeting.

3. The completed application form is returned to the Principal Advisor for Governance, either by email to schoolsgovernance@glosdioc.org.uk or by post to 4 College Green, Gloucester GL1 2LR.
4. The application is considered by the GDBE Foundation Governor Appointment Panel and the panel's decision is final. The panel will not accept incomplete or unsigned applications.
5. The Principal Advisor, on behalf of the GDBE, will issue an appointment/reappointment letter to the foundation governor. A copy of the appointment letter will be sent to the clerk to governors and the secretary to the PCC.

Please be aware that a foundation governor is not officially appointed until a letter of appointment has been received from the Principal Advisor. Until then a potential foundation governor may attend local governing board meetings, with the permission of the governors, as an observer.

6. Records held by the Diocesan Education Team will be updated, and the relevant local authority informed of the appointment.