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Volunteering as a school or college governor



Becoming a governor is a rewarding way of making an important contribution to education. It can help you develop your existing skills and learn new ones. Find out who can become a governor, what training and support you can get and how to apply.

Who can become a governor?

Anyone aged 18 or over can become a school or college governor. No specialist qualifications are needed and people from many different backgrounds volunteer for the role. Enthusiasm, commitment and an interest in education are the most important qualities. You don't need to have a family member attending a school or college to become a governor.

Being a governor - what's involved

You don't need to have a family member at a school or college to become a governor

As a school or college governor, your duties will include:

- setting the strategic direction, policies and objectives
- approving the budget
- reviewing progress against the budget and objectives
- challenging and supporting senior staff
- playing a part in appointing staff

The governing body in schools and colleges is made up of:

- staff representatives
- community governors, including parents or students
- other local sponsors, like businesses

Governing bodies make their decisions based on the advice of committees. Governing bodies in schools and colleges are accountable for:

- the use of public funds
- the quality of education provided
- the wider contribution to the community

You can find out more about becoming a school governor at the 'School Governors' One Stop Shop' website (SGOSS). The 'Governance Good Practice Guide' tells you what is involved in being a college governor.

- [Find out more about the benefits of being a school governor from SGOSS Opens new window](#)
- [College governors: Governance Good Practice Guide Opens new window](#)

Training and support for school governors

Training and development is an important part of becoming an effective school governor. Find out about the training and support available in the 'Training and development support for governors' section on the Department for Education's website.

The GovernorLine support service can provide advice on legal and other issues by telephone or email.

- [Training and development support for school governors Opens new window](#)
- [Contact GovernorLine](#)

Training and support for college governors

As a new college governor, you can expect support and development, starting with an induction into the role. You may be asked to attend a training event, observe meetings or shadow existing governors. Ongoing training will be available to help you keep your knowledge and skills up to date.

Time commitments for school and college governors

As a typical school governor, you can expect to spend at least six to eight hours a month on your duties.

As a college governor, you will need to attend meetings of the governing body at least once a term. You may also be asked to join a committee to look at specific issues.

Governor expenses

School and college governors work on a voluntary basis – they do not get paid. However, you may be paid for any expenses incurred while carrying out your duties, for example for travel or childcare.

Time off for volunteering as a governor

You may be entitled to 'reasonable time' off work if you are an employee and work in a qualifying occupation. To find out which occupations qualify for time off, read 'Time off for public duties' in the employees section.

Your employer doesn't have to pay you for your time off, but may choose to do so.

- [Time off for public duties \(employees section\)](#)

Apply to become a school governor

You can apply to be a school governor:

- directly to your school
- through your local authority
- by filling in the application form on the School Governors' One Stop Shop (SGOSS) website
- [Download an application form to become a school governor](#)

Apply to become a college governor

You can get in touch with your local college, in person or on their website, if you are interested in becoming a governor.

If they don't have any vacancies available, you may be able to get involved by taking part in one of the college committees. You can find contact details for your local college on the EduBase website.

- [Find a local learning provider on EduBase Opens new window](#)