

NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR CLERKS

PHASE 1: MODEL JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

The model job description and person specification were born out of a series of studies and surveys dating back to 1995 when ISCG (Information for School and College Governors) conducted the first study on clerks to governing bodies. A DfEE survey in 1997 and more recent updates, together with evidence from OFSTED, all pointed to the important role of the clerk in governing body effectiveness. In 1999 Estelle Morris launched the National Strategy for Governor Support and Training, and a year later a DfEE Consultation on Governing Bodies identified better clerking as high priority.

In 2001, the DfES contracted ISCG to undertake a small study to explore existing clerking services to governing bodies. This highlighted the need for a nationally agreed standard of service, which governing bodies could expect of their clerk, and to which all clerks could aspire. The Advisory Group on Governance (AGOG) attended by representatives from headteacher associations, churches, governor organisations, LEAs and co-ordinators of governor services agreed that action needed to be taken to improve the quality and level of clerking services.

The DfES invited interested parties to bid for a two-phase project to develop the job description and person specification, initially drafted by ISCG as part of their study, and to develop a national training programme for clerks to governing bodies. The contract was awarded to Consortium 52.

In developing the job description and person specification, in phase 1, Consortium 52 consulted widely providing opportunities for comment through the National Co-ordinators of Governor Services (NCOGs) network, organising a consultation conference for clerks, governors, headteachers and governor organisations, and seeking comment from clerks at local and regional conferences where possible.

In phase 2 of the project, Consortium 52 will develop the training programme for clerks that will enable them to meet the requirements of the job description and person specification. The whole package, including the job description and person specification, will be ready to roll out to training providers around Spring 2003.

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Model Job Description

The job description is written with the purpose of clerks to governing bodies providing a high quality professional Level 2 clerking service to support effective governing bodies.

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| 1 Introduction | <p>The clerk to the Governing Body will be accountable to the Governing Body, working effectively with the chair of governors, and with the headteacher and other governors. The clerk will be responsible for advising the Governing Body on constitutional matters, duties and powers and will work within the broad current legislative framework. He/she will secure the continuity of Governing Body business and observe confidentiality requirements.</p> |
| 2 Meetings | <p>The clerk to the Governing Body will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) work effectively with the chair and headteacher before the Governing Body meeting to prepare a purposeful agenda which takes account of DfES, LEA and church authority issues and is focused on school improvement;b) encourage the headteacher and others to produce agenda papers on time;c) produce, collate and distribute the agenda and papers so that recipients receive them at least seven clear days, and preferably ten days before the meeting;d) record the attendance of governors at the meeting and take appropriate action re absences;e) advise the Governing Body on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after the meeting;f) take notes of the Governing Body meetings to prepare minutes, including indicating who is responsible for any agreed action;g) record all decisions accurately and objectively with timescales for actions;h) send drafts to the chair and headteacher for amendment /approval by the chair;i) copy and circulate the approved draft to all governors within the timescale agreed with the Governing Body;j) advise absent governors of the date of the next meeting;k) keep a minute book, or file of signed minutes, as a an archive record; |

- l) liaise with the chair, prior to the next meeting to receive an update on progress of actions agreed previously by the Governing Body;
- m) following the approval of the minutes at the next meeting forward a copy to the LEA, and where agreed, to the appropriate church or foundation authority;
- n) chair that part of the meeting at which the chair is elected.

3 Membership

The clerk will:

- a) maintain a database of names, addresses and category of Governing Body members, and their term of office;
- b) initiate a welcome pack/letter being sent to newly appointed governors including details of terms of office;
- c) maintain copies of current terms of reference and membership of committee and working parties and nominated governors e.g. Literacy;
- d) advise governors and appointing bodies of expiry of the term of office before term expires so elections or appointments can be organised in a timely manner;
- e) inform the Governing Body of any changes to its membership;
- f) maintain governor meeting attendance records and advise the Governing Body of non-attendance of governors;
- g) advise that a register of Governing Body pecuniary interests is maintained, reviewed annually and lodged within the school;
- h) check with the LEA, and, where appropriate, the church authority that Criminal Records Bureau disclosure has been successfully carried out on all new appointees and re-appointees.

4 Advice and information

The clerk will:

- a) advise the Governing Body on procedural issues;
- b) have access to appropriate legal advice, support and guidance;
- c) ensure that new governors have a copy of the *DfES Guide to the Law* and other relevant information;
- d) take action on governing body's agreed policy to support new governors, taking account of the Guidance for Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors on the National Training Programme

for New Governors and induction materials/courses made available by LEAs and others;

- e) advise on the requisite contents of the school prospectus and annual report to parents;
- f) ensure that statutory policies are in place, and that a file is kept in the school of policies and other school documents approved by the Governing Body;
- g) maintain records of Governing Body correspondence.

5 Professional Development

The clerk will:

- a) successfully complete the National Training Programme for Clerks to Governing Bodies or its equivalent;
- b) attend termly briefings and participate in professional development opportunities;
- c) keep up-to-date with current educational developments and legislation affecting school governance.

6 Optional Extras

The clerk may be asked to perform as part of their duties any of the following. **These additional tasks will usually be negotiated at an extra cost.**

- a) clerk some or all statutory and non statutory Governing Body committees;
- b) assist with the elections of parent, teacher and staff governors;
- c) give advice and support to governors taking on new roles such as chair or chair of a committee;
- d) participate in, and contribute to the training of governors in areas appropriate to the clerking role;
- e) maintain a file of relevant DfES and LEA documents;
- f) maintain archive materials;
- g) assist with the preparation of the Annual Report to Parents, assembling the statutory information and copying and distributing the report;
- h) assist with the organisation of the Annual Parents' Meeting;
- i) clerk the Annual Parents' Meeting;
- j) prepare briefing papers for the Governing Body, as necessary;
- k) help to produce a Governing Body Year Planner, which includes an annual calendar of meetings and the cycle of agenda items for meetings of the Governing Body and its committees.

2	Qualifications and training	<p>The clerk should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to demonstrate a willingness to attend appropriate training and development; • have already attended or make a commitment to attend the National Training Programme for Clerks or its equivalent. 	E	D
3	Experience	<p>Clerks should be able to produce evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant personal and professional development; • working in an environment where experiences included taking initiative and self motivation; • working as a member of a team. 		D D D
4	Personal attributes	<p>The clerk should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a person of integrity; • be able to maintain confidentiality; • be able to remain impartial; • have a flexible approach to working hours; • be sympathetic to the needs of others; • have an openness to learning and change; • have a positive attitude to personal development and training; • have good interpersonal skills. 	E E E E E E E	
5	Special Requirements	<p>The clerk should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to work at times convenient to the Governing Body, including evening meetings; • be able to travel to meetings; • be available to be contacted at mutually agreed times. 	E E E	