

School and trust governance professionals: 2021 and beyond

Dr Samuel Tranter with Amy Wright



Contents

Introduction	1	Recruitment requirements	12
NGA's 2021 survey of clerks and governance professionals	2	Induction	12
Methodology	2	Qualifications held	13
Responses to the survey		Ongoing training and development	15
Key findings of the 2021 survey	3	Appraisals	18
2021 survey findings	4	Raising the profession's profile	18
Routes into the profession	4	Career progression	19
Motivations for joining the profession	4	Conclusion	22
Employment and self-employment	5	Resources	23
Serving multiple boards	6		
Job titles	6		
Pay	7		
Levels of confidence and satisfaction	8		
Views on use of the term governance professional as a collective description	10		
Qualifications required	11		

Introduction

Governance professionals are paid to provide administrative and advisory support to governing boards and, depending on their roles and the governance structures served, act as the strategic lead for wider governance support provided by clerks. They make an invaluable contribution to board efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and compliance. They also have a crucial role in promoting the culture that ensures good governance in schools and trusts.

Since 2013 NGA has run a Clerking Matters campaign to raise the status and profile and improve the pay, conditions and CPD of all types of governance professionals. The campaign has produced a number of initiatives and resources highlighting the role. Perhaps its most notable success was to persuade the Department for Education (DfE) to fund a development programme for clerks. NGA became the largest provider and is particularly proud that the Leading Governance programme has offered a Level 3 Certificate in the Clerking of School and Academy Governing Boards accredited by the Chartered Governance Institute.

The governance landscape has changed a great deal since 2013. School structures have continued to evolve and become more complex and boards in different

settings have a wider range of responsibilities. As a result, governance professionals need to demonstrate different levels of skills, experience and knowledge depending on the type of board(s) they are supporting. The DfE published its Clerking Competency Framework in 2017 as non-statutory guidance setting out the four competencies required to deliver professional clerking to school governing boards and multi academy trusts: understanding governance, administration, advice and guidance, people and relationships. The DfE has also strengthened its guidance in the Governance Handbook and the Academy Trust Handbook 2021, requiring boards to appoint a governance professional.

There has been much debate around the language used to describe the professional roles; this began in earnest during the consultations of the Competency Framework, when the majority of those consulted wanted to continue to be addressed as clerks. However, this had changed at our Clerking Conference 2020 and the Governance Handbook now places the title of governance professional alongside that of clerk.

Despite these developments, the issues that led to the establishment of the Clerking Matters campaign continue to affect clerks and other governance professionals working at all levels in schools and trusts. Chief among them is a lack of understanding at board level of the expectations of the role, alongside the responsibilities, knowledge and skills required to fulfil it. In many cases this has led to governance professionals not receiving

the recognition, reward and support that they require, making the role less attractive for those seeking a professional career.

In 2016, NGA carried out an extensive survey of clerks' pay and employment conditions. It received over 1,400 responses and revealed significant variations in pay and conditions, and resulted in the following key findings:

- Almost 70% of respondents were employed directly by the school.
- Over half of respondents clerked for only one school.
- General administrative duties such as preparing the agenda and taking minutes were predictably the most selected duties. However, nearly a quarter of respondents did not select giving legal advice as one of their duties (legal advice referred to any advice which ensured fulfilment of the governing board's legal obligations).
- Academy clerks were paid more than those working in maintained schools. This was irrespective of how they were paid (eg hourly, per meeting or via an annual salary) and may have related to different roles being undertaken.
- Academy clerks also spent more hours on clerking tasks per week than those in maintained schools.
- 52% of clerks said they did not receive an annual appraisal.
- There was a general consensus that clerks worked more hours than they were paid for.



In 2020 we attempted to respond to evidence that a significant number of clerks/governance professionals were not being paid at an appropriate level or even for all the hours worked. With the help of an expert steering group, we provided credible evidence-based recommendations as to a reasonable rate of pay for those providing clerking services to a single school. The subsequent report, *Putting a Price on Effective Clerking*, stated that this should be no less than between £12.85 per hour and £14.74 per hour based on the level of experience involved.

NGA's 2021 survey of clerks and governance professionals

The 2021 survey built on our previous surveys by aiming to:

- Establish a more accurate picture of the career landscape for clerks and other governance professionals as it stands.
- Provide important context to ongoing debates surrounding the evolution of governance professional roles.
- Identify opportunities and potential solutions to support practitioners and develop the profession.

In the meantime, the DfE has established its own project group (on which NGA is represented) to support its work on elevating the status of governance support within governing boards and more widely across the sector. While that work is initially focused on roles within multi academy trusts, in this report we are interested in the whole governance profession serving state schools in England, whether individuals are working in the maintained sector, trust sector or, as is common, both.

Methodology

The findings of this report are based on a self-selecting online survey conducted between 19 February and 1 April 2021 through the SmartSurvey website. The survey was open to all governance professionals of state-funded schools in England and collected quantitative information

as to their views and experiences. Not all of those surveyed will have answered the same set of questions as the survey was automatically tailored according to respondent's role and setting. The information gathered from this sample was also subject to a large number of variables such as region and school type.

The collection of responses followed ethical guidelines for educational research. While the survey is completely anonymous, we encouraged respondents to share their thoughts and expand on their responses. However, all identifying information has been removed for the purpose of this report.

For more information about the methodology of this research, please contact research@nga.org.uk.

Responses to the survey

While the survey received a large number of responses, these remain a relatively small self-selecting sample of the total number of those who work in the profession. We estimate the entire governance workforce in state schools in England to be in the region of 10,000.

The survey received 1,272 completed responses including 165 partial responses. Of the respondents:

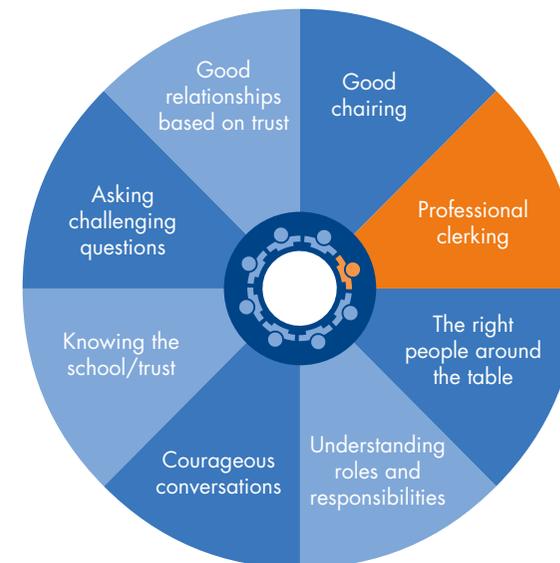
- Two-thirds were clerks serving maintained governing bodies and academy committees (see figure 5).
- A third were serving in a range of other governance professional roles.

Overall responses are therefore weighted towards the views of clerks working at that level. However, responses were examined by role throughout and differences reported here.

Thirty per cent of respondents told us that they served academy trust boards, though it is not clear what proportion of respondents served exclusively within the academy sector. Currently 44% of schools are academies, and there are 2,601 academy trusts (9,588 total academies) compared with 12,007 maintained schools.

Although the ways in which the governance professional role is fulfilled within academy trusts varies, these respondents do appear to cover a range of structures.

Respondents experience ranged from less than 12 months to over 10 years, providing variety of viewpoints linked to various stages of career progression.



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank first and foremost the governance professionals who completed the survey, thus providing NGA and the wider sector information about their work and experiences. Recognition should also go to our colleagues Nina Sharma and Kirstie Ebbs for their significant roles in data analysis, report presentation and promotion.

Key findings of the 2021 survey

There is support for using the term governance professional.

1. The majority of respondents (70%) support use of the term governance professional as a collective description or umbrella term for all roles within the profession.
2. An increasingly varied portfolio of governance professional roles in the state school sector reflects complex governance structures and various levels of support, and different job titles will continue to be needed to distinguish between those roles within the profession.

There is insufficient focus on development within the profession.

1. Over a quarter of respondents were offered no induction training, with significant variations in quality and scope where such training was offered.
2. Many respondents (39%) still do not receive an annual appraisal.
3. Where appraisals do take place, almost three quarters of them are not being used to support conversations about professional development.
4. A majority (59%) believe minimum qualification requirements would improve the quality of clerking.
5. Only a very small minority of those surveyed were required to hold a qualification or accreditation both initially and following any subsequent performance appraisals.
6. Respondents were most likely to rate themselves 'not so confident' when identifying appropriate CPD.

7. Only a small minority saw scope for progression in their roles.
8. Many decisions not to pursue qualifications and other training opportunities reflect a lack of perceived benefit.
9. Paid hours do not always cover or account for the time required to undertake CPD.

The profession is under-paid, especially clerks.

1. Although a number of hourly rates are aligned with NGA's recommended minimum rate for clerking a single governing board, the majority of respondents operating at the clerking level (58%) are still being paid below that amount.
2. Low pay and lack of understanding as to what the role entails are among the reasons for wanting to leave the profession.
3. For the vast majority (85%) of those who gained a qualification, it did not result in a pay increase, though benefits other than pay were acknowledged.
4. Rates of pay were affected by who set the pay: those respondents who set their own rates of pay were more likely to earn NGA's recommended figure.



2021 survey findings

Routes into the profession

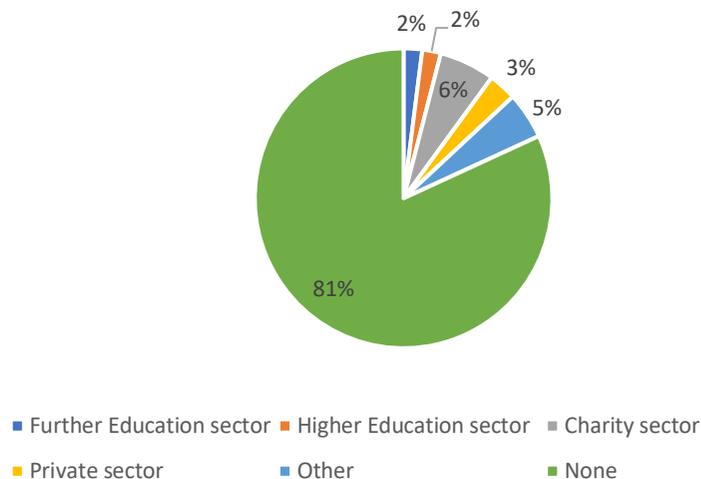
At a glance:

- The profession is accessible from a range of other jobs.
- Most practitioners have not served as governance professionals in another sector.

Respondents arrived at the profession from a wide variety of employment backgrounds. A number were previously linked to the school sector or had prior experience in other administrative, secretarial or legal roles. Twelve percent had other experience of school or academy trust governance, for example by having served as a governor or trustee. However, a great many others told us they had no prior links to the school sector whatsoever, being previously employed in other areas of the public sector such as the NHS or civil service or having occupied various roles in the private and third sectors.

Less than 20% of respondents reported that they had worked as governance professionals in another sector, with the most experience being gained in the charity sector, as Figure 1 demonstrates. Prior experience also covered local government, the NHS and parish councils.

Figure 1. Which other sectors have you provided services for as a governance professional?

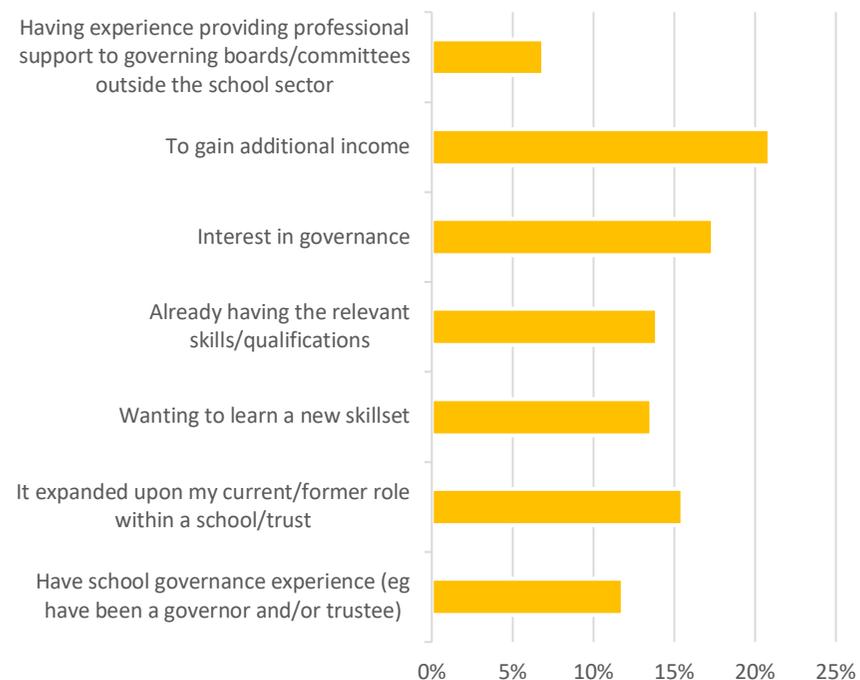


Other governance professionals were more likely than clerks to report that they had worked as governance professionals in another sector. For example, those whose job titles were Governance Professional or Governance Manager were almost twice as likely as clerks to governing boards or academy committees to have gained experience as a governance professional in another sector.

Motivations for joining the profession

Figure 2 shows how motivations for joining the profession varied considerably and that the primary motivation is to gain an additional income.

Figure 2. What motivated you to take on your first clerking role?



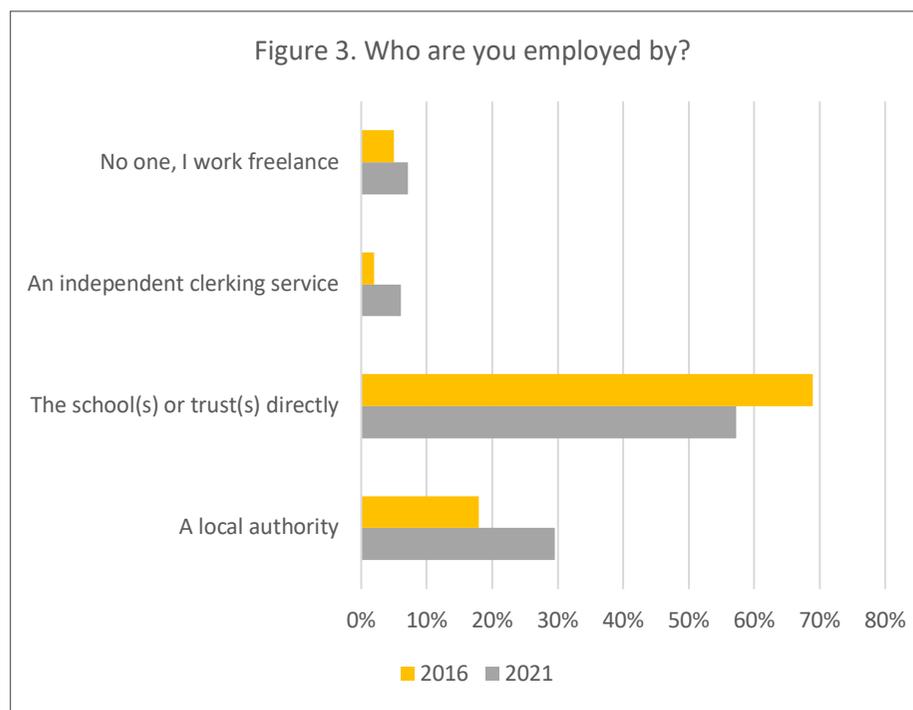
Employment and self-employment

At a glance:

- The majority of respondents (71%) work as a governance professional on a part-time or casual basis.
- The majority are employees of schools/trusts (57%) or local authorities (30%).

The employment status of respondents varied, as illustrated in Figure 3, with the majority being employed by the school or trust directly.

Since our last clerking survey in 2016, the number employed by schools or trusts fell by 12%, while the number employed by local authorities rose by the same figure. Given the self-selecting nature of the surveys, it cannot be assumed that this is a trend as opposed to different respondents, although early data from NGA's 2021 governance survey also suggests that a similar percentage (32%) are employed by local authorities.

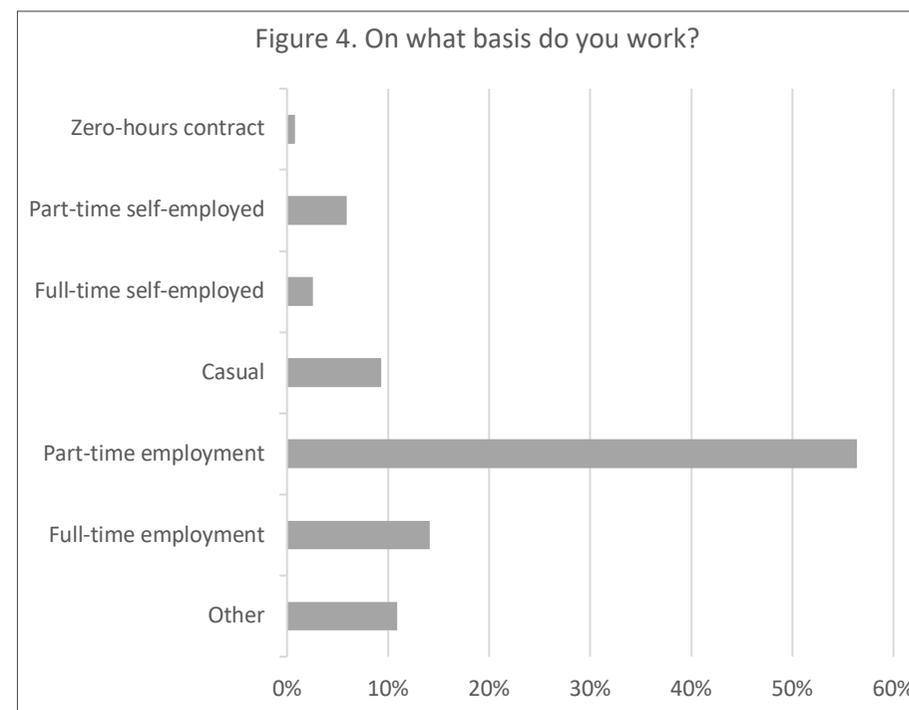


This is significant given that over a quarter of respondents (26%) to the governance survey told us that they request support from local authorities when covering for the temporary absence of their governance professional.

However, it is of interest that the number of academies has increased over the last five years, and the academy sector is more likely to employ governance staff directly. It is also important to note that being employed by a local authority does not equate with only working in the maintained sector: 11% of those employed by local authorities had the job title Clerk to the Trust Board.

The nature of respondents' contracts also varied as illustrated in Figure 4, albeit with a clear tendency towards working part-time.

A number of those surveyed also responded with 'Other' in order to elaborate on how they were employed on different bases for different boards or how clerking duties formed one aspect of a wider role.



Overall, 17% of respondents reported that they worked full-time. Within that number:

- > 28% conducted a governance professional role on a full-time basis.
- > 33% also fulfilled other roles in the school or trust (most commonly PA to the CEO or headteacher).
- > 30% provided services to several schools or trusts at once.

Serving multiple boards

At a glance:

- An increased number are clerking multiple boards since the last time NGA conducted this type of survey.
- On average, respondents clerk four boards although 42% serve only one board.
- Of respondents who clerk MAT boards, 30% clerked all the academy committees as well, 42% clerked some of the academy committees and 27% managed others who clerked the academy committees.

The single largest group of respondents (42%) served only one governing board, with those employed on a part-time or casual basis most likely to select this answer. This represents an increase in the number of practitioners serving multiple boards since the last time NGA conducted this type of survey, when approximately half of respondents told us they served only one board.

Twenty two per cent of respondents served MAT trust boards and also clerked some or all of the academy committees themselves (13% clerked some of the academy committees in addition to the trust board and 9% clerked all academy committees in addition to the trust board). Additionally, 8% of respondents served MAT trust boards and managed an individual or team who clerked the academy committees within the trust.

The average number of boards served across all respondents was four, with those who worked full-time (either on an employed or self-employed basis) being twice as likely as their part-time counterparts to exceed this figure, and four times more likely to serve 10 or more boards.

We also asked whether committees or panels were served in addition to full governing boards, with 85% of respondents replying that they serve the committees of some or all of their boards. We would expect all committees to be clerked, although recognise that this expectation is not always achieved. It is not clear how to account for the other 15% of cases, though the fact that some boards operate without committees must be recognised, given that early evidence from NGA's 2021 school governance survey suggests that numerous boards have adopted this model.

The figure serving panels was lower at 74%, although not all respondents will have been expected to perform this duty or have it in their job descriptions given how panels are convened only when required in relation to a limited

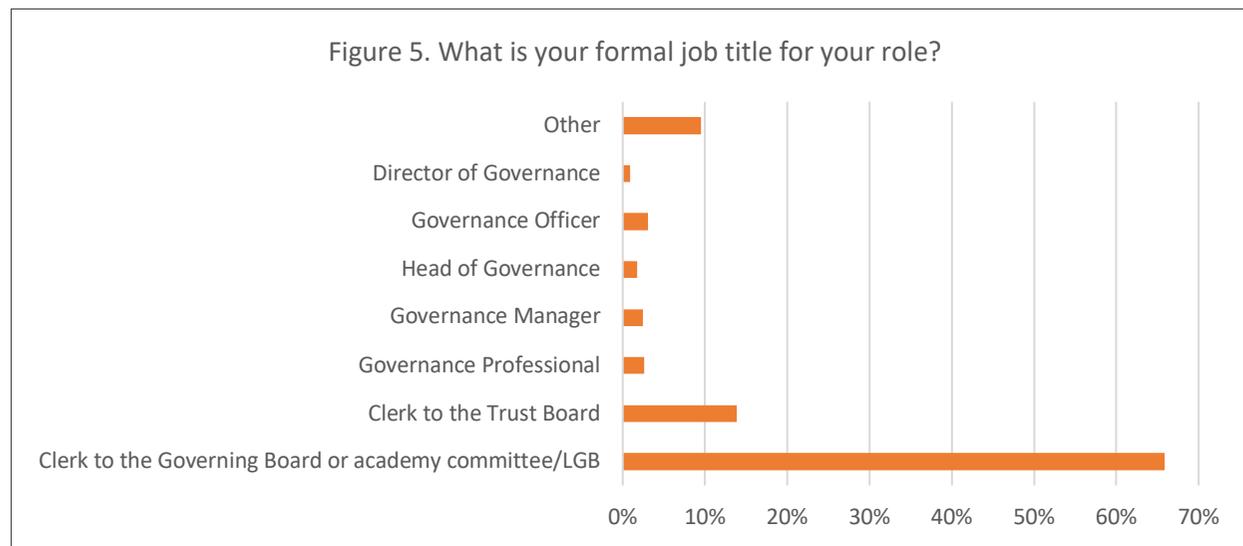
number of specific procedures. This figure is closely aligned with the fact that 28% of respondents had not received training for panels.

Job titles

At a glance:

- Most respondents (80%) had the title 'Clerk' with 17.5% of those being clerk to the trust board and the large remainder serving maintained school governing boards or academy committees.
- Twenty percent of respondents had a wide variety of job titles.

Respondents, whether employed or self-employed, were asked to select all titles that applied to their various roles. The majority (80%) had clerk in their job title, as illustrated in Figure 5. Of these, over a fifth chose clerk to the trust board. The remaining 20% who did not have clerk in their job title had a variety of job titles, with no option scoring more than 3%. Other responses included 'Company Secretary', 'Trust Secretary' and other 'Officer' roles unique to individual organisations.



The use of different job titles was determined to some extent by context. Only 5% of those employed by local authorities did not have clerk as their job title, rising to 13% when schools or trusts were the employer and 21% for respondents not employed directly by either the school, trust or local authority. This highlights the increased tendency of those with more freedom to choose their own job title (ie those who operated independently) to use an alternative title to clerk – Governance Professional being the preferred alternative in this case.

Job titles are also used to reflect the type of clerking role and level of responsibility that goes with it. This is the case not only in MATs which have more complex governing structures, but also within the organisational structure of traded clerking providers.

Pay

At a glance:

- A majority of clerks to school governing boards and academy committees are being paid below what NGA considers to be the minimum rate for the role defined in our model role description for a single school.
- Rates of pay reflect not only job titles but also who pay is set by.

The 2021 survey asked respondents to place their current hourly rate or equivalent into one of the pay ranges provided. This information was disclosed by approximately half of those surveyed. Overall, it placed 54% of respondents below NGA's recommended minimum rate of approximately £13 – £15 per hour for clerking a single school, with the most common pay range being £10.00 – £12.99 per hour. Those clerking maintained school governing boards and academy committees were more likely to be paid below NGA's recommended minimum rate for clerking a single school.

Figures 6-8 distinguish between numbers of clerks to single schools (ie maintained school governing boards or academy committees), clerks to trust boards and other governance professional roles, in accordance with much of the analysis that follows.

As expected, clerks to trust boards were paid a higher hourly rate (exceeding £12.99) more often than clerks to a governing board or academy committee. Governance Managers and Directors of Governance received even higher rates of pay.

Just 2% of respondents earning £10.00 – £12.99 per hour used a Governance Professional job title, or similar, (as distinct from clerk). That figure rose dramatically to 21% of respondents who earned £16.00 – £19.99 and 38% of those who earned £25.00 – £29.99 per hour. However, this reveals a huge increase in the earning potential of other governance professionals, especially when considering their relatively small number within this sample.

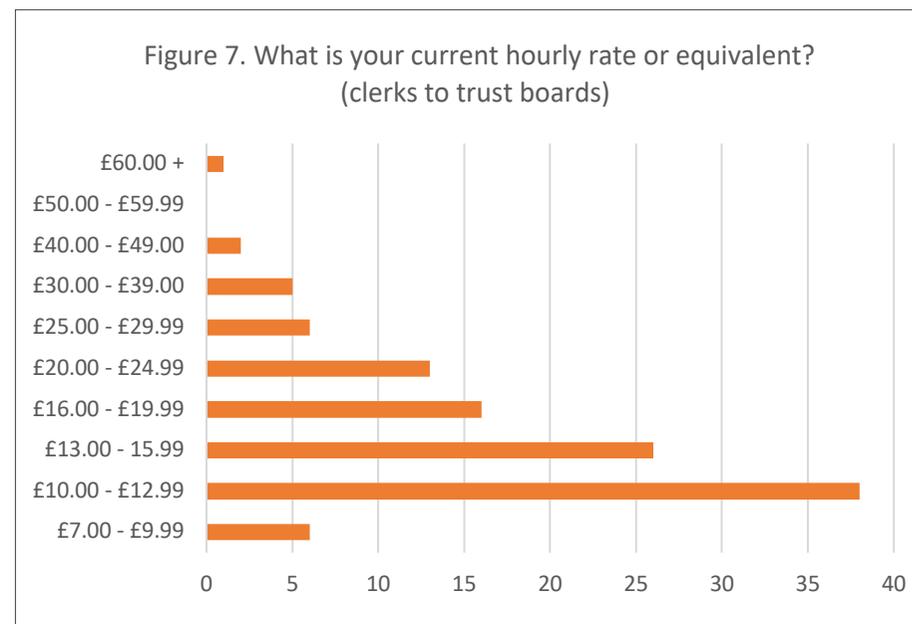
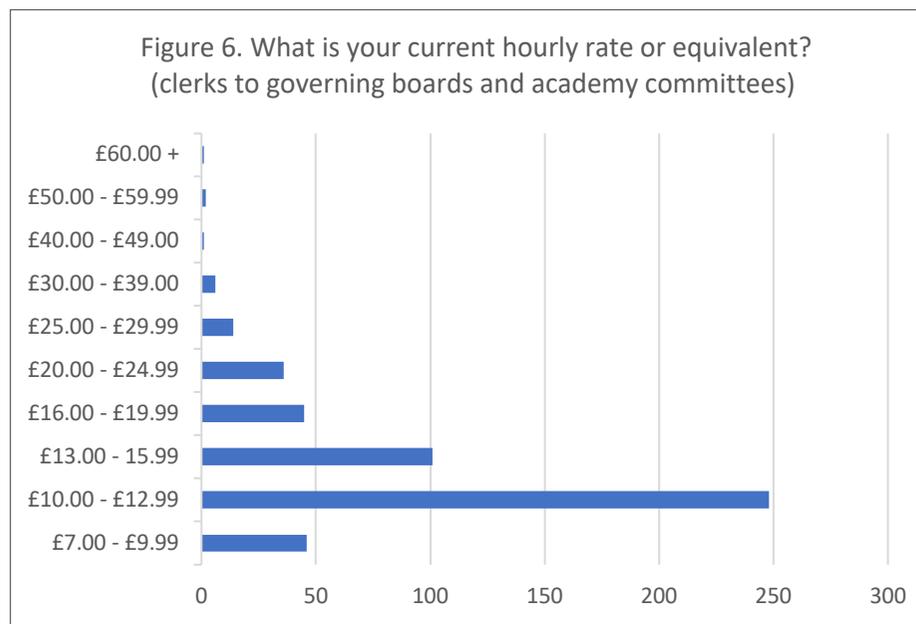
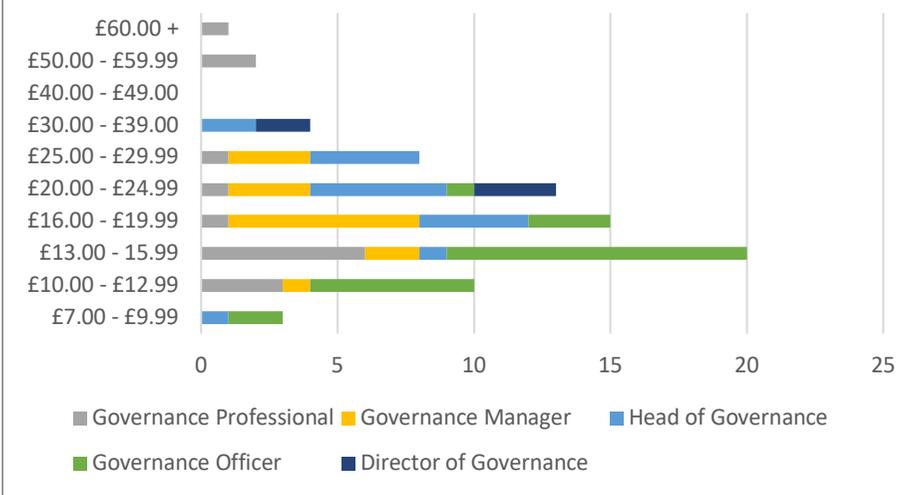


Figure 8. What is your current hourly rate or equivalent?
(other governance professionals)



Possible explanations for this pattern include increased scope for line management responsibilities within wider governance support teams: 33% of those who earned £25.00 – £29.99 per hour carried the job title Governance Manager or Head of Governance. It was also the case that other governance professionals were more likely to have worked as governance professionals in another sector, thus increasing opportunities to gain a wider range of knowledge, skills and experience linked to the possibility of higher rates of pay.

There were also some regional variations. For example, no one working in London reported that they earned the equivalent of £7.00 – £9.99 per hour, whereas a quarter of those who fell within this range were located in the East Midlands.

Those in a position to determine their own rate of pay (eg independent providers) were more likely to be paid at a rate between £13.00 – £15.99 per hour. In contrast, those whose pay was determined by the headteacher/CEO, the chair/board or another employer such as a local authority or other service provider, were up to three times more likely to be paid at a rate between £10.00 – £12.99 per hour than those in a position to determine their own rate of pay.

Concerns about pay discrepancies were expressed in some of the comments from respondents:

“There is a big discrepancy between the skills listed on sample job descriptions and the money that is offered. A person with the required skills is worth more than the rates agreed at Local Authority level.”

“The hourly rate of pay is low and assumes a more clerical role, rather than governance and advice that is involved if the role is carried out properly.”

“Many clerks operate without job descriptions or any sort of performance management. The range of pay is very wide for clerks doing the same job – there needs to be a consistent pay scale. The profession needs nationally recognised/required training and criteria to meet for moving up the pay scale.”

Unacceptably low levels of pay could explain why, at the time of writing, a quarter of respondents to NGA’s annual governance survey had reported difficulty in recruiting a governance professional.

Levels of confidence and satisfaction

At a glance:

- Confidence and satisfaction varies according to role.
- Respondents are least confident at identifying relevant CPD.
- Remuneration and opportunities for progression account for the lowest levels of satisfaction.



The levels of confidence respondents had in fulfilling aspects of their role were established using a rating system as demonstrated in Figure 9. Generally speaking, building and maintaining professional working relationships, keeping accurate records of board membership and contributing to the induction and training of board members were the areas in which respondents were most confident, although the majority of respondents expressed confidence across all areas.

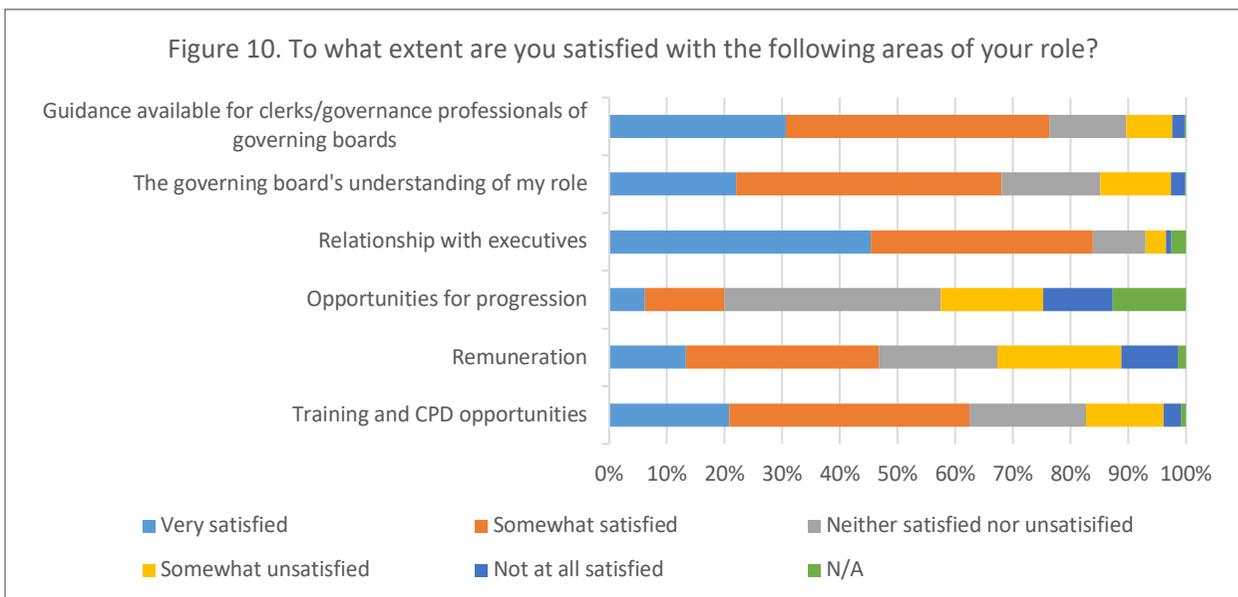
At the other end of the scale, respondents were most likely to rate themselves 'not so confident' (7%) or 'not at all confident' (1%) when it came to identifying training and CPD relevant to their roles. This was followed by providing accurate advice and guidance or signposting to expert advice where appropriate, in which 5% rated themselves 'not so confident' and 1% 'not at all confident'.

Closer analysis of the responses reveals a link between role and varying levels of confidence in different areas. For example, 63% of those who stated they were extremely confident in recording board membership and contributing to the induction and training of board members were clerks to governing boards or academy committees. However, the same group only accounted for 41% of those who rated themselves extremely confident in building and maintaining professional working relationships with boards. Similar discrepancies are clear from the ratings provided by clerks to trusts boards. For example, this group accounted for 23% of those who were extremely confident in building and maintaining professional working relationships but only 10% of those who rated themselves extremely confident in their knowledge and understanding of the board's legal roles and responsibilities – possibly reflecting the added complexity of additional compliance with company and charity law in this context.

Figure 9. Please rate your confidence within the following areas of your role.



Figure 10. To what extent are you satisfied with the following areas of your role?



In contrast, this level of variation was absent from the ratings provided by those in other governance professional roles such as Governance Manager or Head of Governance. The latter were also considerably more likely than those in clerking roles to rate themselves as confident across all the competencies listed.

We also asked respondents to rate their levels of satisfaction in other areas linked to their professional environment.

Overall, the greatest levels of satisfaction related to relationships with executives and the guidance available for practitioners. In both cases, a majority stated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied'. However, there was no majority consensus on pay/remuneration (46% rated themselves 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied'), with distinctly lower levels of satisfaction (20%) when it came to opportunities for progression.

Once again, satisfaction varied according to role. Only 4% of clerks to governing boards or academy committees were 'very satisfied' with their opportunities for progression, compared to 11% of clerks to trust boards, 24% of Heads of Governance and 33% of Directors of Governance. Pay/remuneration also divided opinion. Only 18% of clerks to trust boards were 'very satisfied' with the pay they receive, compared to 36% of Heads of Governance and 56% of Directors of Governance. This contrast can be explained as a straightforward reflection of attainment in these areas.

Views on use of the term governance professional as a collective description

At a glance:

- The majority of respondents (70%) support use of the term governance professional as a collective description or umbrella term for all roles within the profession, while 19% were unsure what this would achieve.
- A range of job titles is still required to cover the increasingly varied portfolio of governance professional roles reflecting complex governance structures and differing levels of support and expertise.

Respondents were asked to select one or more broad statements (see Figure 11) and provide comments which captured their views on the use of the term governance professional as a collective noun describing those involved in supporting and advising governing boards in schools and trusts. The responses indicate that some interpreted this question as a proposal that governance professional be adopted as a universal job title, which was not the case. Nevertheless, a range of valuable comments were provided on the appropriate context for using the term governance professional.

A majority of respondents (70%) expressed support for this approach on the grounds of unity, equality and as a way of elevating the status of clerking roles. Some comments suggested that the term clerk was old fashioned, misleading and not helpful in building a

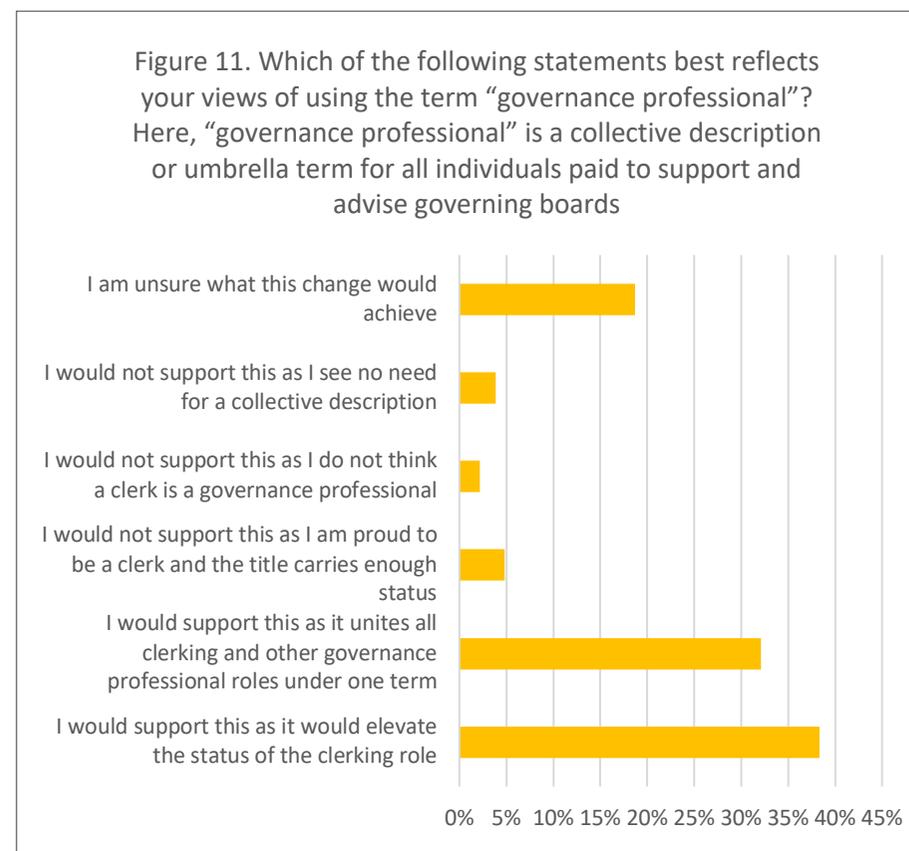
greater understanding (on the part of school leaders and governing boards) of what the role actually entails.

“Anything that can elevate the status of the role would be good. It is hugely underestimated just how much knowledge and skills are required.”

“Anything that helps headteachers and governing bodies recognise the role of the clerk will be a good thing.”

“Clerking is a slightly old fashioned term and can be viewed as ‘admin and typing’. Aligning the role with ‘governance’ would help raise the profile.”

“It is a very important role in the effectiveness of a GB and in order to raise the profile within education and wider, there does need to be a shift in the language used.”



Clerks to a school governing board or academy committee were slightly less likely (68% compared to the 70% overall) to support this use of the term governance professional, being more likely to highlight pride in the term clerk and the belief that it carries enough status. The latter applied to 6% of clerks to governing boards or academy committees as compared with only 2% of Governance Managers. On the other hand, 43% of Governance Managers supported this use of the term governance professional in order to elevate the status of clerking roles, whereas this figure fell to 41% of clerks to trust boards and 37% of clerks to governing boards or academy committees.

The overall number who did not consider a clerk to be a governance professional was extremely low (2%), although it is worth noting that this was slightly higher (9%) among those with the job title Head of Governance and 10% of those with the job title Governance Professional. Respondents with the job title Governance Professional or Head of Governance were still more likely than not to support wider collective use of the term governance professional to describe all those supporting governing boards.

Beyond general uncertainty as to what this use of the term governance professional might achieve, a number of respondents specifically cited the term's ambiguity as their reason for being hesitant to support it. The comments highlighted that some unease arose from a misunderstanding that the proposal was to replace various job titles with this single title, with the varying nature of roles within the profession being emphasised.

Some clerks also expressed doubts when it came to possessing the required level of knowledge, skill or experience to be referred to as anything other than clerk:

“I do not feel I have the necessary skills or experience to be classed as a ‘governance professional’.”

“My role is purely that of an admin clerk – organisational etc. The word ‘professional’ implies a greater depth of understanding and knowledge than I feel that I have.”

“For myself in a combined role with that of school administrator I do not feel competent enough or experienced enough to be described as a professional.”

There were also suggestions that the term governance professional should be reserved for those operating within central support teams providing advice, guidance and support to clerks performing a limited number of core duties:

“The MAT has a governance team and would not want their status / role diluted.”

“There does need to be a defined difference between full-time paid ‘advisors’ in LAs or Academy roles and a part-time clerk.”

While the question did not propose that governance professional be adopted as a universal job title (rather as an umbrella term), some respondents suggested that its use may impede recruitment to clerking roles where potential candidates more readily identify with the role of clerk. Once more, this points to the importance of highlighting the status, level of responsibility and accountability of clerking roles when recruiting to them.

A number of respondents drew attention to the fact that, to a certain extent, the term is already used in this way, for example by the DfE and NGA, but also by practitioners themselves.

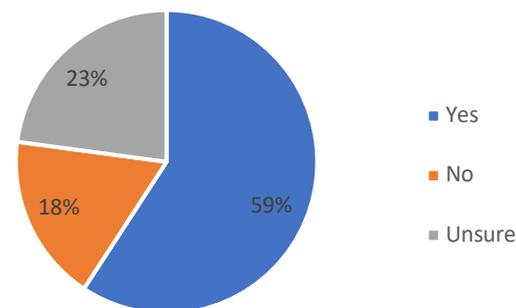
Qualifications required

At a glance:

- A majority of respondents (59%) would support the introduction of minimum qualification requirements, with the greatest level of support (73%) for this coming from those who already possess a qualification.

NGA's survey focused not only on pay and conditions but also the questions of status and career progression, including the role played by qualifications. This is important given how raising the role's profile is closely linked to improving the quality of the service provided and, therefore, the related question of whether a formal qualification requirement might help improve the quality of clerking. We therefore posed this question directly, with the following results:

Figure 12. Do you think a requirement for clerks to have a formal qualification would help improve the quality of clerking in schools and trusts?



Within these figures, views differed based on whether or not respondents already possessed a formal qualification, with the widest distribution of opinions found among those who did not. Although 43% of this group agreed that a formal qualification requirement would help improve the quality of clerking, 23% felt that it would not and 30% were unsure. In contrast, 73% of those already in possession of a clerking-specific qualification thought that it would, with only 12% disagreeing, leaving the remainder unsure.

The level of support for this approach indicates the potential for minimum qualifications to raise the profile of the profession. Respondents who supported use of the term governance professional as a collective description often suggested that this term should only be adopted on completion of a qualification universally recognised as underwriting professional status. In support of this view, respondents also drew comparisons with other professions that have minimum qualification requirements such as teaching staff requiring qualified teacher status.

Recruitment requirements

At a glance:

- A very small number of respondents (5%) were required to hold a qualification at the point of recruitment.
- There were more initial expectations on those who were first recruited longer ago.

Only 5% of respondents were expected to hold a qualification or accreditation in clerking when recruited into their first role, as compared with 90% requiring a history of administrative support, 73% requiring experience of minute-taking, 39% requiring governance-specific knowledge and 30% requiring awareness and understanding of relevant legislation. A further 3% were unsure as to what the expectations were.

There was very little variation in the recruitment requirements applied to those in employed and self-employed roles. However, one difference stood out: the more time that had passed since respondents' first clerking roles, the more likely it was that these initial requirements were stipulated, revealing a downward trend in the level of expectation attached to the role by employers at the point of recruitment.

Induction

At a glance:

- Over a quarter of those surveyed were not offered an induction for any of their roles.
- The quality of induction, where offered, is inconsistent.

Concerns were raised about the level of induction and other relevant training that, if successfully completed, might confer professional status and/or raise the profile of the profession and therefore contribute to career progression opportunities, as captured in the following comment:

"The level of training would definitely have to increase, or at least the Induction training would in order for the 'Clerk' to be a governance professional – it took me a year to really understand the job."

While 44% of respondents were offered an induction for all of their roles, 28% stated that this only applied to some of their roles, closely followed by the 26% who revealed they had not been offered an induction for any of their roles. Self-employed practitioners were less likely to be offered an induction for all of their roles, which applied to 27% of those in part-time self-employed roles and 29% of those in full-time self-employed roles, whereas induction was offered for all roles for 33% of those in full-time employment and 49% of those in part-time employment. In terms of offers of induction by different employers, of those who reported they were offered an induction for all of their roles, 51% were employed by schools/trusts and 39% by local authorities. However, 68% of those who were not offered an induction for any of their roles were also employed by schools/trusts, revealing inconsistency in different organisations' approaches.

Effective induction was identified as including not only comprehensive overviews of school governance and clerking roles but also in-depth coverage of specific scenarios or procedures. Although not strictly induction, ongoing support such as mentoring, regular updates or briefings, and the opportunity to network with colleagues was appreciated by respondents.

Generally speaking, comments regarding the availability and quality of induction training were most positive where induction was offered or procured through local authority governor services. Unfortunately, this level of induction was often found wanting in areas where local authority support had diminished, providing a possible explanation for regional variations in offers of induction training. For example, while over 50% of respondents from Yorkshire and the Humber, the West Midlands and the South East had been offered induction training for all of their roles, only 36% from the North West and 37% from the North East had been given this opportunity.

Some respondents highlighted the difficulties associated with receiving a comprehensive induction to academy trust governance without having to pay for the certificate in academy governance offered by the Chartered Governance Institute (unless this formed part of local authority offers or was delivered by trusts themselves, which was not always the case).

Regardless of context, other commonly highlighted gaps in induction were linked to an overreliance on reading core documents and, therefore, a lack of practical examples relating to specific scenarios. However, by far the most common explanation for lack of formal induction training was attributed to induction simply taking the form of brief handovers from previous post-holders and/or limited shadowing of roles. This approach was shown to have varying degrees of success when it came to adequately preparing for the role and its complexities.

In many cases, the above concerns were used to support the assertion that, in the absence of a comprehensive induction, the required level of learning was carried out 'on the job', placing a huge amount of importance on the need to continually seek opportunities for further training and professional development. This highlighted by the number of respondents who relied on various other forms of training and development, and the fact that the overall figures associated with these outstripped the number of respondents who had been offered an induction or had completed a formal qualification.

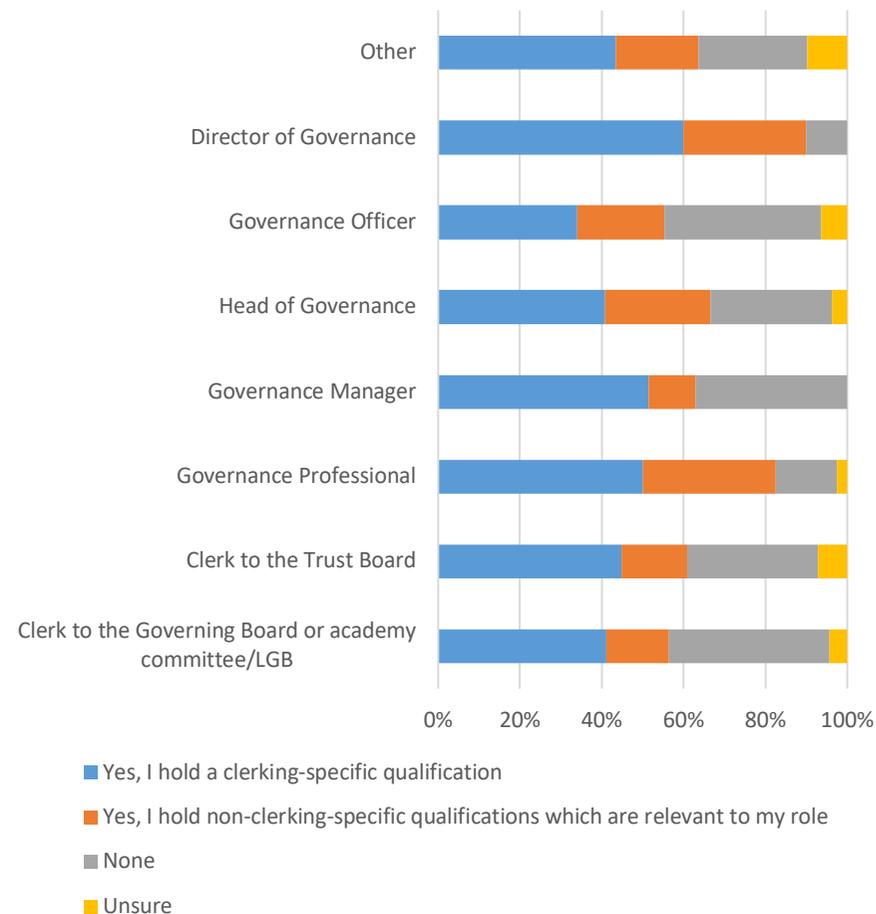
Qualifications held

At a glance:

- A majority of respondents chose to undertake qualifications as personal development and to improve skillsets.
- Most qualifications did not result in a pay increase but were otherwise seen as beneficial.
- Decisions not to pursue qualifications reflect restricted time and availability but also lack of perceived benefit on the part of boards as well as practitioners, making associated costs difficult to justify.

Despite the very low number of initial requests by employers for a formal qualification/accreditation, 41% of respondents told us that they currently hold a clerking-specific accredited qualification, while 17% possessed a non-clerking-specific qualification that they nonetheless identified as relevant to their roles. The percentages of those who possessed qualifications across different types of roles can be seen adjacent (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. Do you hold any accredited qualifications relevant to your clerking/governance professional role?



Respondents provided information on the type and level of qualifications held. A full breakdown is provided (see Figure 14), revealing the most popular choice to be the Level 3 Certificate in the Clerking of School and Academy Governing Boards delivered via NGA’s Leading Governance Programme. In terms of completion rates, this was closely followed by the Level 3 certificate offered by Hampshire County Council. As such, Level 3 certificates accounted for over 70% of the qualifications held. Some respondents questioned the value of the Level 3 certificate for those who are experienced in clerking roles, because in their view it is more suited to entry-level clerks. It is certainly the case that those who were relatively inexperienced in clerking roles endorsed the usefulness of completing the Level 3 certificate at this stage of their career. Typical among the comments was:

“I undertook the NGA’s Leading Governance development programme for Clerks which gave me a deeper understanding of the role. I feel I benefitted enormously from this programme in knowledge, confidence and networking with other Clerks.”

Other responses not included in the list provided were alternative providers of the DfE-funded development programme in the form of Entrust, the School Development Support Agency and the Institute of School Business Leaders’ Professional Clerking

Programme, along with other historical offers no longer available such as the National College of Teaching and Leadership’s Clerks Development Programme.

Equally important to understanding the purpose currently served by such qualifications are the reasons given for pursuing them. Although these varied, personal initiatives around development and enhancing skillsets were the leading factors, as demonstrated in Figure 15.

Ambitions for career development also came into the equation, though the link between the ambition to progress in one’s career and the pursuit of a formal qualification was noticeably weaker, accounting for 14% of responses. Similar was true of the number who cited financial incentives when listing other reasons, making it unsurprising that only 11% of respondents reported that completion of a qualification had resulted in an increase in pay. The lack of tangible reward for completing a formal qualification mirrors the apparent lack of employer or governing board interest in encouraging those in governance professional roles to participate in CPD. This is examined further in the section on appraisals.

Figure 14. Have you completed any of the following qualifications?

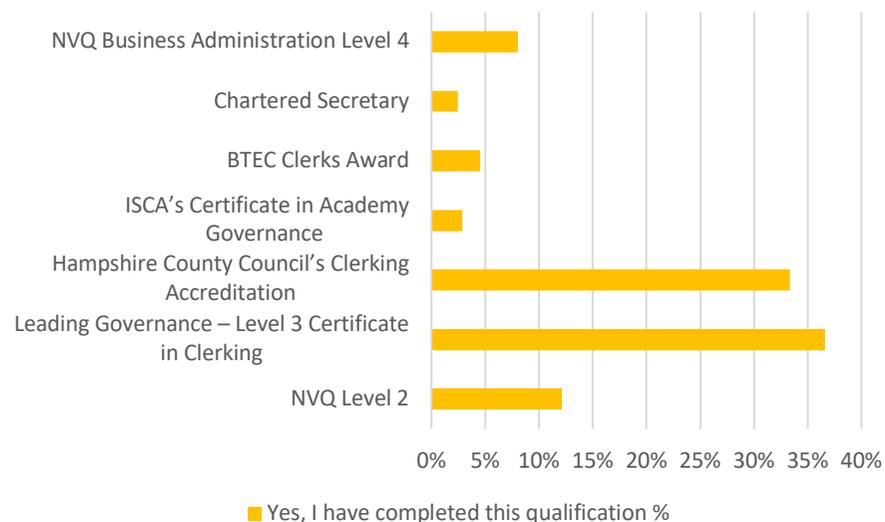
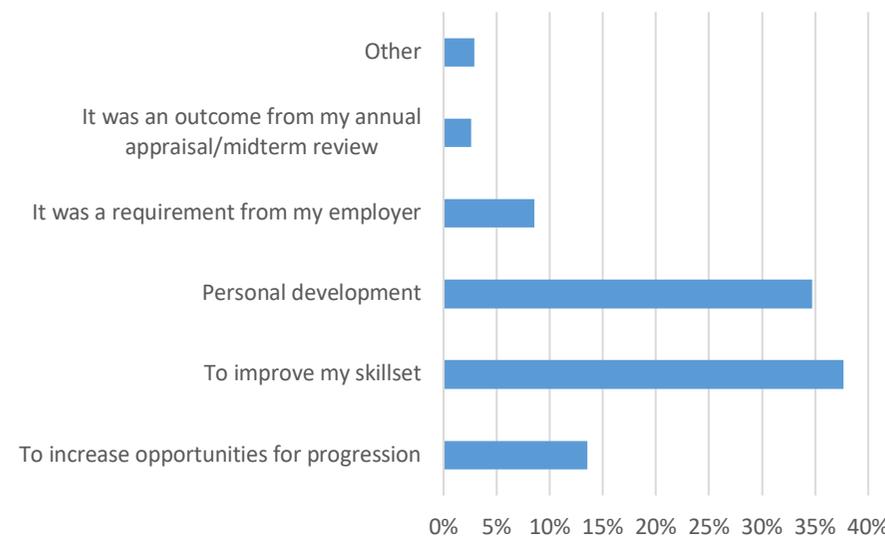


Figure 15. Why did you undertake a qualification/accreditation?

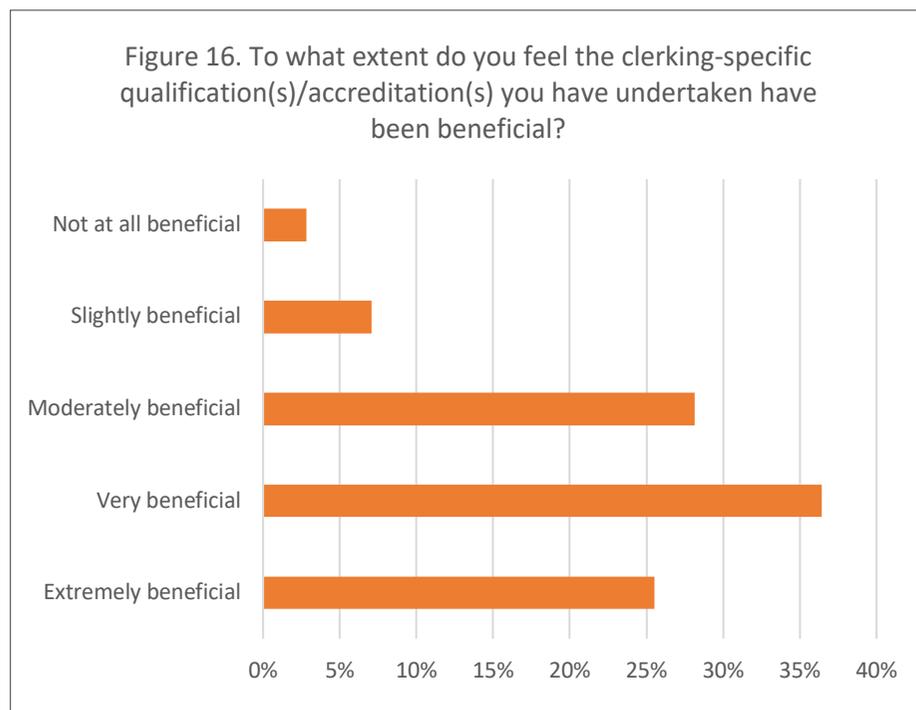


In spite of these limitations, the number of those with clerking-specific qualifications who viewed these as beneficial to their role far outweighed those who conceded they saw no benefit (see Figure 16). There was also very little variation between roles when it came to those who felt their qualifications were ‘extremely beneficial’ or ‘very beneficial’.

It is therefore significant that the lack of a perceived benefit (to the individual) was cited as one of the main reasons (after lack of time or availability of opportunity) for respondents choosing not to undertake an accredited qualification and requesting funding support from their employer or governing board. Typical of the comments were:

“I considered this recently but did not want to ask my employer for funding and was also worried about the time commitment.”

“Given the state of school budgets, I do not believe that the funding for such a course would be either available or justifiable.”



Concerns about cost were also explicitly linked to the ending of DfE funding in March 2021:

“I am not sure whether my employers would pay the additional amount left from the DfE funding.”

“The government pulled the funding just when I had decided to book on to the NGA accredited course.”

“Was going to do the clerks development programme but now funding gone I don’t know if school will fund it. Not right time to ask I feel.”

It is also clear from the comments provided that some decisions not to pursue a qualification simply mirrored the lack of requirement for these by employers or the schools/trusts served:

“My organisation considers it unnecessary. There is no incentive to do so.”

“My employer has never suggested that I need take any qualifications.”

“The perception is from the Headteacher not from my own perspective.”

In many other cases, practitioners were simply unaware of their existence:

“I am not sure which ones are available or what would benefit me.”

“I was unaware there was an accreditation/qualification for Clerks.”

“I did not realise this was possible.”

Ongoing training and development

At a glance:

- Various forms of training and development hold broad appeal that cuts across roles, though ongoing CPD is more popular among those who have also completed qualifications.
- Time, availability and the cost of CPD were the three leading reasons for not undertaking further training and development opportunities.
- As with qualifications, incentives are sometimes compromised by a perceived lack of pay and progression benefits.

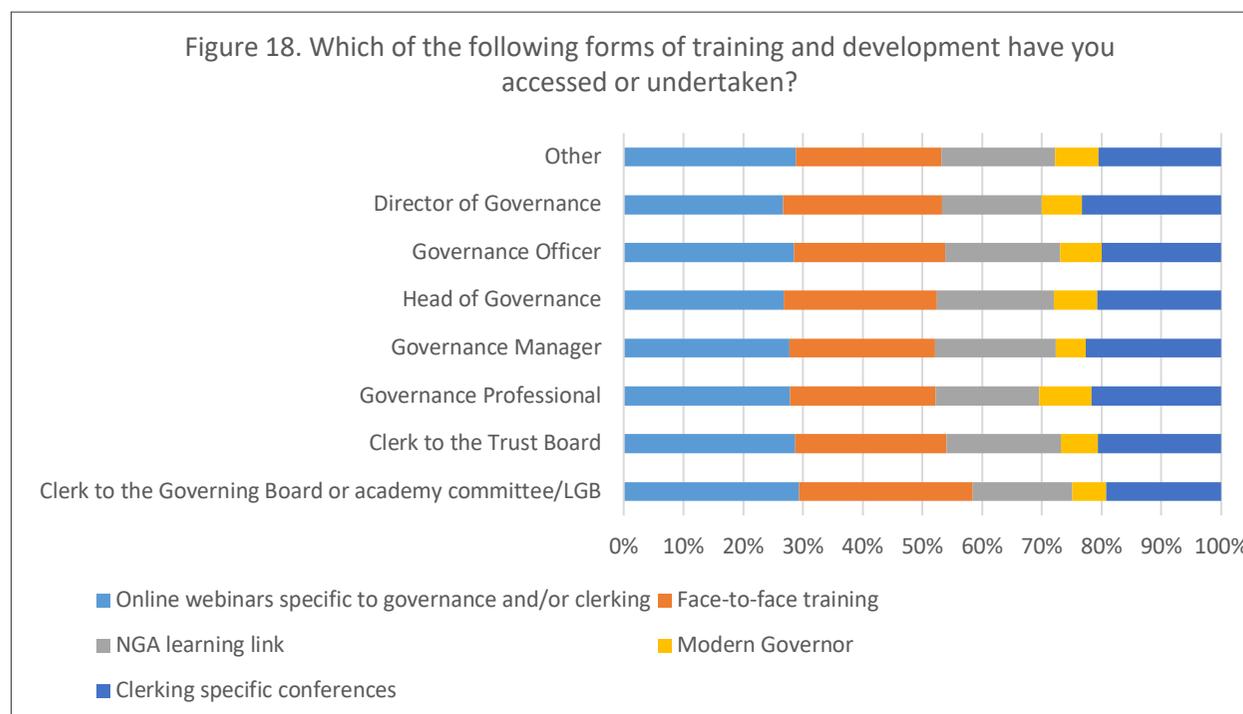
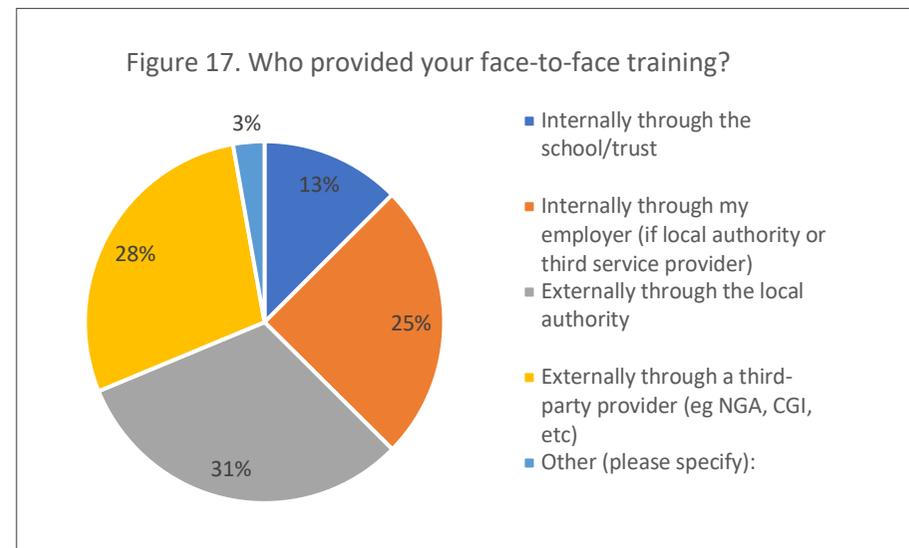
The leading form of training which had not resulted in a qualification was webinars specific to governance and/or clerking. These were favoured by 75% of respondents, the majority of whom did not hold a qualification in clerking, revealing their popularity among those seeking alternative means of expanding their knowledge and experience, especially where cost was a concern. This was a benefit of webinars that are often free of charge and 13% of those surveyed reported that they relied solely on free training or free online resources.

The level of participation in webinars was closely followed by the 72% who attended face-to-face training sessions. Local authorities were the leading providers as demonstrated by Figure 17. Those most likely to utilise this type of local authority provision were clerks to governing boards or academy committees, whereas clerks to trust boards were more likely to use a third-party provider than to look to local authorities in cases where training was not delivered internally by the trust – as were other governance professionals.

Clerking-specific conferences were also attended by over half of those surveyed. In terms of e-learning, 44% had made use of NGA's Learning Link service, while 15% had accessed Modern Governor's e-learning modules.

With the exception of webinars, these training and development opportunities were more popular with those who also possessed a governance qualification. For example, over 300 respondents who told us they held a clerking-specific qualification, along with a further 96 who possessed other relevant formal qualifications, also accessed Learning Link, as compared with the 173 who used this service but did not hold any qualifications. The same was true of those who were offered inductions suggesting that, some employers are more likely to offer CPD. For example, face-to-face training sessions were attended by over twice as many respondents who had been offered an induction for some or all of their roles when compared with those who had not, while Learning Link was accessed by over three times as many. This also suggests that, although additional forms of training and development were a useful means of plugging gaps in knowledge and skills, they were not necessarily used as straightforward 'on the job' alternatives to formal qualifications or inductions – more often than not they complemented these.

Figure 18 also demonstrates how the appeal of various forms of training and development varied very little between roles.



When it came to reasons for not undertaking further training and development opportunities beyond qualifications and induction (Figure 19), time and availability once again came out on top, particularly in the context of pressures created by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the cost of training not far behind. This was exacerbated by the fact that paid hours did not always cover or account for the time required to undertake further training – an explanation commonly linked to the argument that the costs associated with completing training at personal expense were too great:

“Employer will not pay for my time.”

“Agreement for paid time has not been given for out of hours training.”

“I am fortunate to have access to NGA events and Learning Link through one of my schools. However, I would find it more difficult to continue my professional development if this were not the case, as I could not afford the cost.”

Where cost pressures were linked to employers not assisting with funding, there were marked discrepancies between employer types. Only 5% of those who highlighted this problem were employed by independent clerking services, whereas this figure rose to 18% within local authorities and 32% in cases where a school or academy trust was the employer. However, this should not detract from the fact that 74% of those who provided details of how their qualifications or training had been funded reported that costs were met entirely by their employer, whereas only 3% were self-funded.

Following cost pressures, the second biggest reason given by those respondents who had not undertaken relevant CPD was that it would not benefit their future career progression or earnings. Typical among the comments were:

“While I am motivated to attend further training and development opportunities, to support my schools in the best way possible, I acknowledge there is currently no financial benefit/pay progression.”

Figure 19. Do any of the following reasons explain why you have not undertaken further training and development opportunities?



“I feel awkward asking a cash-strapped school for funding my CPD that has no perceived benefits.”

“For me, personally or professionally, there is no perceived benefit in terms of progression or earnings.”

Respondents also commented on the cost benefit attached to the content of available CPD/training courses:

“Where the most relevant ones are costly they are often too similar to previous courses my employers have already subsidised and a Clerk’s salary can’t fund hundreds of pounds in full.”

“When I have looked into training to further enhance my knowledge, the training is aimed at new clerks and focuses on the basics not for experienced clerks.”

“Some training is just too basic!!!”

However, the most common explanation given by those clerking for school governing boards and academy committees for not undertaking further CPD was that it had simply never been considered or suggested by their employers:

“It is not offered or encouraged.”

“Hasn’t been encouraged by employer.”

“No perceived benefit from the Headteacher.”

“It is not seen as priority by the Governing board or something they take an interest in.”

When considered alongside the analysis of appraisals, this explanation suggests that there is much room for improvement when it comes to professional conversations between employers and governance professionals that support continuing CPD.

Appraisals

At a glance:

- The use of appraisals has increased since the last time NGA conducted this type of survey.
- However, almost three quarters of appraisals are not being used to support conversations about professional development.

The percentage of respondents who told us they received an annual appraisal grew from 48% in 2016 to 61%, representing an improvement in awareness of its importance. However, it does point to the significant amount of work yet to be done if appraisal, and therefore development, of governance professionals is to be brought in line with other professional roles.

It was reassuring to see some reports of personal and professional development objectives being discussed alongside the ways practitioners could be supported by their employers. However, only 27% of those who received an annual appraisal reported that these conversations included discussion of development (including CPD) for the coming year. The most common topic covered during appraisal discussions was performance against objectives, but this still only featured in 34% of appraisals. These and other factors including the accuracy of job descriptions and pay in relation to hours worked were appraised consistently across all types of role. The one clear exception concerned those in the role of Director of Governance, who were almost twice as likely than those in clerking roles to be appraised on their contributions to the wider governance of the school or trust, reinforcing how such roles are more closely aligned with the strategic functions of governing boards.

There was considerably more variation in who appraisals were conducted by. Overall, chairs or vice-chairs were the most common appraisers.

This held true for clerks to governing boards or academy committees but was not the case for clerks to trust boards, who were most commonly appraised by the lead

executives within their respective organisations. The latter scenario was even more likely for Governance Managers, Heads of Governance and Directors of Governance.

Beyond these variations that can be explained to a large extent as reflecting line management responsibilities within respective organisations, widespread criticism of how appraisals were used also highlighted a distinct lack of formality or structure to the appraisal process. This was characterised by conversations where clear objectives were not referred to instead amounted to little more than an informal catch up. Another concerning trend involved the role not being appraised in cases where clerking duties were viewed as supplementary to other roles within the school or trust – factors which make it unsurprising that so few respondents reported having professional conversations about CPD as part of their performance appraisals.

Shortcomings in the use of appraisals are further highlighted by findings from NGA's annual governance survey, early data from which reveals that 35% of respondents don't know who is responsible for conducting their governance professional's appraisal, with a further 18% confirming that no appraisal takes place.

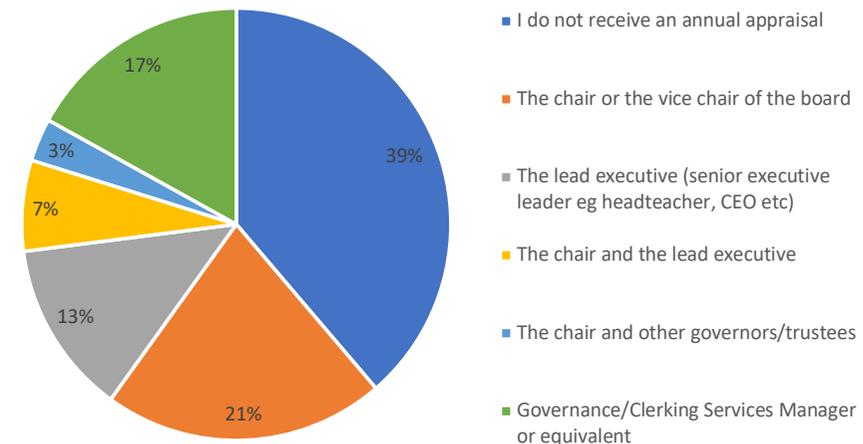
Raising the profession's profile

At a glance:

- Respondents were clear that culture and structure must evolve in order to increase recognition for the profession and help raise its profile.

Alongside views on use of the term governance professional having the potential to elevate status, comments were made about the need for further solutions

Figure 20. Who conducts your annual appraisal?



when it comes to raising the profile of the profession and empowering those in it:

“Any upgrades that can be made to the perception of the role would be welcome.”

“The role does not have the profile required for the responsibility.”

“The Clerk’s role is very often undermined & usually viewed as ‘just the minute taker’; I’m not sure how to elevate the profile of a Clerk.”

Comments highlighted the extent to which there are differing expectations (between boards) on the role and how it can be taken for granted:

“Clerking is a key factor in the effectiveness of governance and therefore the leadership of a school. Often it is an underutilised resource just because school leaders and governors don’t realise its potential, raising the expectation is key to also raising the performance and effectiveness.”

“It’s the boards that need to be addressed – in my experience, the boards / schools which make training budgets available, invest in resources (such as NGA membership) and give annual appraisal are also those which treat me like a professional – both in approaching me for advice (and listening to it) and in my remuneration.”

Linked to this is the call for a culture and language shift leading to a review of the framework within which governance professionals operate:

“Change will not come only from changing job titles but also culture and structure.”

“We need a structure that differentiates between the many levels, just as there is in many professions.”

“The structure for clerks is too flat and that results in frustration and turnover.”

There are clearly concerns over the lack of opportunities for career progression, highlighted by a number of respondents:

“No consideration of career progression.”

“Lack of career progression opportunity.”

“I am unaware of career progression opportunities within the clerking role.”

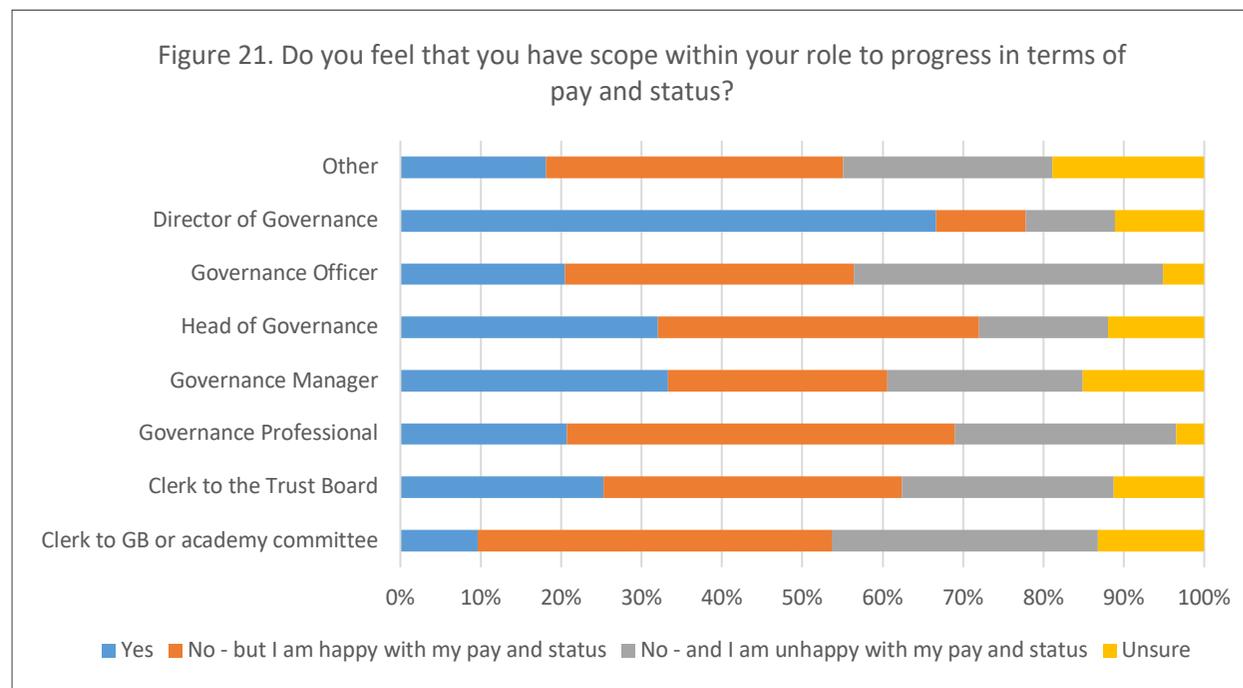
Career progression

At a glance:

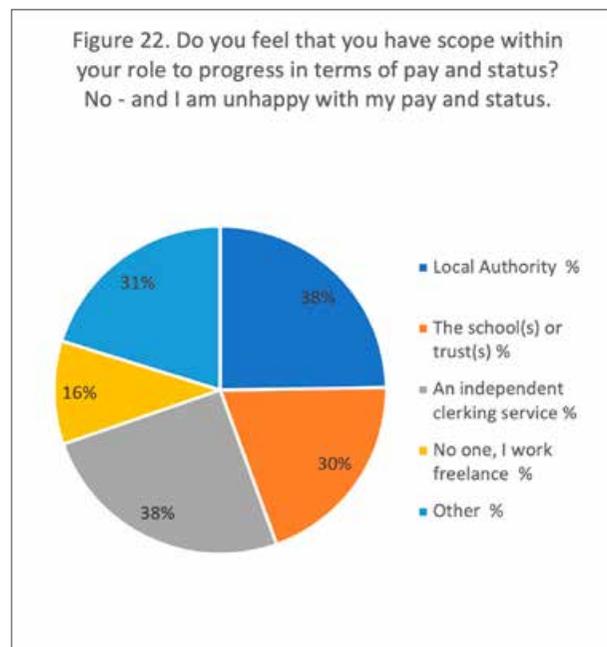
- Most (74%) of those surveyed were unable to identify opportunities for progression.
- Over a quarter of practitioners (28%) believe there are not enough high-quality qualifications available.

- A lack of career pathway that supports progression opportunities is restricting pay and status.

Almost a third (31%) of all respondents reported that they were unhappy with their current pay and status but saw no scope for progression in their roles. That said, 43% saw no scope for progression but were happy with their current pay and status. Only 13% were able to identify opportunities for progression, going some way to explaining the limited number of qualifications driven by this incentive. Examining the answers to this question by role reveals that only 10% of clerks to governing boards or academy committees saw scope for progression, making them the least likely to do so (see Figure 21).

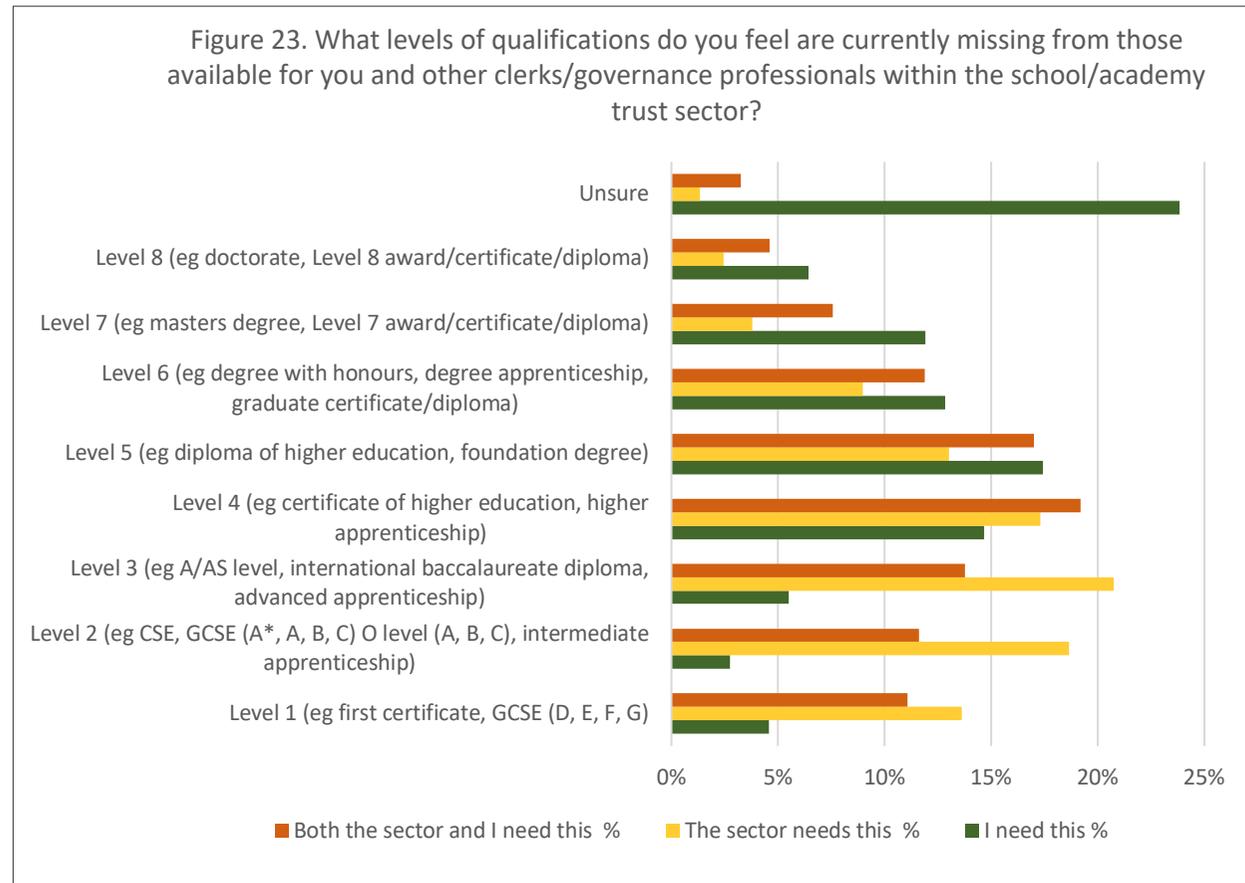


Only Governance Officers were more likely than clerks to governing boards or academy committees to state that they were unhappy with their pay and status but saw no scope for progression. This response was also selected by an equal percentage of respondents employed by local authorities and independent clerking services (Figure 22).



Although a 61% majority stated an intention to continue in their current roles, 28% of respondents revealed an intention to move on, while a further 10% stated they would only remain in the profession if they received sufficient opportunities for development.

Further to debates over how progression might be supported, we asked respondents if they felt there were enough high-quality qualifications at the required level. Although the figure for those who believed that there were



not enough appropriate qualifications available was smaller than the percentage of those who thought there were enough (33%), the single largest group of respondents (38%) were those who were unsure.

Twenty-eight per cent of all respondents felt that there were not enough high-quality qualifications at the levels they required or were viewed as needed by the sector. Figure 23 goes into greater detail as to the levels of qualifications respondents felt were missing.

We also asked for opinions on other gaps in training and qualifications in relation to the options, with a majority of respondents drawing attention to the lack of focused short courses and entry-level training for those with little to no experience (Figure 24).

Some respondents called for the development of a career pathway showing the qualifications and relevant CPD governance professionals need to progress their status, career and pay:

“There should be a career pathway.”

“It is important that there is a career pathway available which is clear, attainable and affordable. It also has to be relevant.”

Some responses indicated what a career pathway might look like for certain roles:

“I would like to see a clear pathway for clerks to progress from entry level through to, eg company secretary, should they wish to. The current options (via ICOSA) are limited and expensive. I would also like to see a bespoke apprenticeship for clerks coming into the profession. At present the options relate to business administration which, while relevant, does not provide the governance knowledge and understanding needed.”

“I appreciate that different schools/Trusts/Committees have different requirements of support and I believe that there should be a ‘Governance Support’ structure with clear job descriptions for each level, going through pay and grading and graded in accordance with the accountability and line management within that role... a clear structure of responsibility, accountability and graded would elevate the clerking/governance professional role and provide a clear career progression in this area.”

The following comments given as reasons for wanting to move onto a different career further highlight the strong link between lack of career pathway and insufficient pay:

“Better career progression and salary.”

“Opportunities for progression and greater pay satisfaction.”

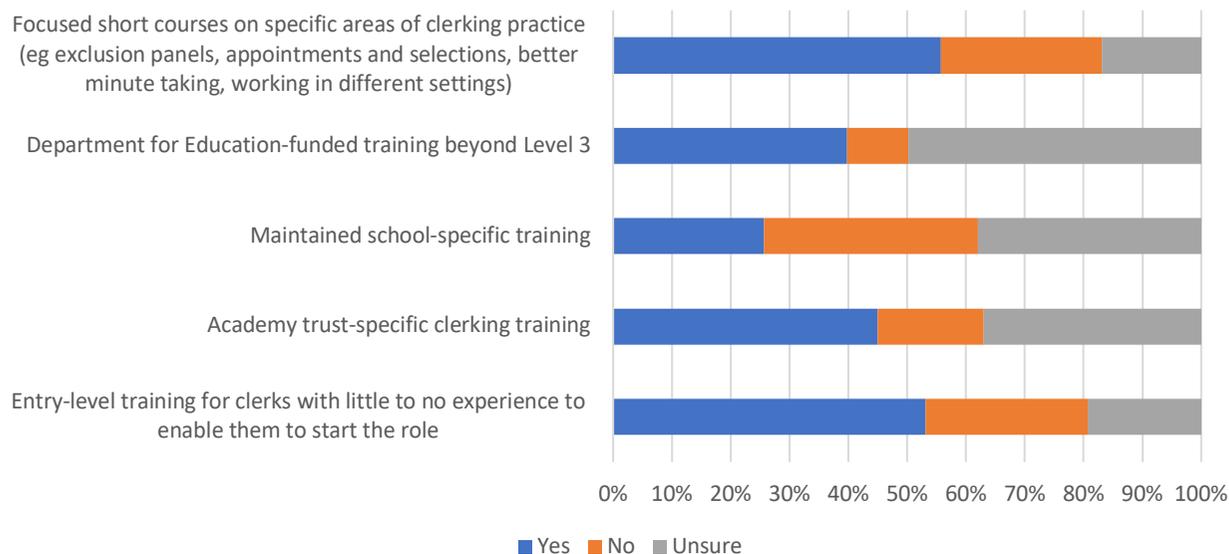
“My only route for career progression, or even just annual pay progression, will be to leave my current role.”

Building on this, another viewpoint highlighted the link between the opportunity to improve rates of pay (widely criticised as not being commensurate with professional status) and a move towards wider use of the term governance professional backed by a requirement for formal qualifications that could pave the way for progression opportunities:

“I think [the term governance professional] should apply once the clerk has reached a professional status and would then make that clerk more employable etc and that should be reflected as part of pay appraisal etc once the professional clerking qualification has been reached. Schools/MATs could then be clear about recruiting a ‘basic’ clerk or a ‘governance professional’ who holds that qualification. It would also provide progression opportunities, incentive for spending the time to undertake the qualification and give structure to the clerking roles more broadly.”

This makes a crucial point about the role of qualifications in relation to a possible career pathway – the need for which is clear from responses about intentions to remain in the profession or reasons for wanting to switch careers.

Figure 24. Do you believe there are any gaps in the qualifications and/or training available for clerks/ governance professionals in the following areas?



Conclusion

At a glance:

- Governance professionals are undervalued because their critical and valuable role is not well understood by the entire sector.
- Governance professionals require a career framework linked to clear expectations and relevant qualifications.
- Governing boards have been slow to implement the Clerking Matters expectations. As well as undermining the profession, this also has a detrimental effect on advancing pay to appropriate levels.
- Governing boards, governance professionals and the wider sector must renew their commitment to implementing the Clerking Matters expectations as part of a collective response to giving the profession the status, recognition, support, challenge and reward it both needs and deserves.

Long-standing Clerking Matters expectations:

In order to ensure effective school and trust governance:

1. Governance professionals are entitled to appropriate CPD including induction to new roles
2. Governance professionals should receive an annual appraisal, involving the chair of the governing board (even if the clerk's services are engaged from a third party) at which CPD is discussed
3. Governance professionals need to be invested in (both in terms of remuneration and adequate time)
4. Governing boards need to understand the scope and importance of the role of their trusted, independent adviser.

Despite its successes, the campaign has not fully met these expectations. Governance professionals are not being universally recognised, supported or rewarded

to the extent that the role demands. Given the majority support for this from respondents, NGA will be adopting the term governance professional as a collective description for all those involved in supporting and advising governing boards in schools and trusts. Although different governance structures require additional or different knowledge, the profession is very much one with many serving both trusts and maintained schools. Most of our current trust governance professionals began their careers working in maintained schools, and this illustrates one of the moves which allows progress within the profession. Within the governance profession there are a variety of different roles, and one of the job titles which is likely to endure is that of clerk.

Simply changing our language is not a magic wand, but is a signal which underlines the need for professional recognition and reward, and in turn the adoption of the habits and behaviours of a profession. A profession requires a career pathway with qualifications and a framework which relates that to remuneration. It was heartening how many respondents had recently embarked on the Level 4 academy governance qualification or chartered status offered by the Chartered Governance Institute, but on the other hand there were many for whom the cost was prohibitive. A few voices requested an education-focused higher qualification, rather than a purely corporate one.

The cessation of DfE funding for the Clerking Development programme in which so many had participated is a retrograde move; a timeframe for its replacement is needed, preferably as part of a clear career framework. NGA will use the information provided by this survey to champion the profession's development needs. There needs to be buy-in from all parts of the sector to the importance of CPD for governance professionals if we are to build the necessary capacity for high quality clerking and create the conditions for progression across all types and sizes of school and governing structure.

Even the minimum pay rate recommended over a year ago by NGA is not being paid to the majority of clerks: this is unacceptable. Governance professionals need to raise the issue of pay and appraisals with their employers, and for those currently being paid under £13 – £15 an hour, NGA's 2020 report should be persuasive. We heard from a few who have used this argument, but there now needs to be a significant change. For governance professionals in other roles, the proposed career framework would be of use in those reward discussions too. Fair pay would of course also aid recruitment and retention.

This survey could not cover the full range of issues involving the supply of governance professionals, but in many places it can be hard to recruit, and therefore some schools, especially it appears within academy trusts, have resorted to using the headteacher's PA. This is not a recommended solution, as the governance professional needs to be independent of the lead executive. Their loyalty must be first and foremost to the board, while retaining the authority to challenge the board and the executive when needs be.

In the very early days of Clerking Matters we began the 'Find us a Clerk' service – a free matchmaking platform for use by schools/trusts and governance professionals; we expected this to be a temporary offer, but it has continued in the absence of anything more appropriate. However, it does not befit a profession and we will explore with others a better solution.

NGA will campaign for a collective commitment to address these deep-rooted issues of pay, development and recognition. Without that we are in danger of losing talented and committed governance professionals from the schools sector. Their individual and collective voices need to be heard to ensure change, and NGA will use this report to do just that. We aim to achieve the proposed career framework through collaboration, and in the meantime work with governance professionals to support them in their engagement in pay evaluation, commensurate with the role they fulfil and recognition of increased proficiency and qualifications.

As the leading organisation representing governance in the state-school sector, NGA can play a key role in helping governance professionals overcome the challenges identified in this report. If you are looking for resources, support and networking opportunities to help you in your school, MAT, SAT or other setting, NGA can help.

Clerking section of the NGA website

NGA has links to services, research and news for governance professionals on a dedicated webpage: [Clerking – National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](http://nga.org.uk) which includes links to the Clerking Matters campaign and information on appraisals for governance professionals.

Clerking Network and annual conference

The clerking network meetings and annual conference bring together governance professionals from all school settings to share experiences and best practice. The network is open to all NGA members who are serving in a governance professional capacity and benefits from the diverse viewpoints this brings.

Find us a Clerk service

As part of NGA's Clerking Matters campaign, we developed a service to help governing boards find clerks. This is a free matchmaking service for schools and governance professionals to use.

Knowledge Centre

NGA has a wealth of resources to help governance professionals overcome the challenges identified in this report. These are all available to NGA members at nga.org.uk/knowledge-centre.

Learning Link

NGA Learning Link helps governors, trustees, chairs and clerks/governance professionals develop their governance skills and knowledge. With over 50 high-quality e-learning modules, and a selection of bitesize

'just in time' modules, Learning Link provides flexible e-learning anytime, anywhere. Learning collections include: recording a meeting; exclusion panels; introduction to clerking; structures, roles and responsibilities; good governance; vision, ethos and strategic direction; pupil success and wellbeing; the best use of resources; compliance and much more. Discounts are available for multiple purchases of Learning Link. Please contact us to find out more: nga.org.uk/LearningLink.

NGA Goldline

Cannot find an answer to your question or challenge in the Knowledge Centre? Join NGA as a GOLD member and receive expert, confidential and independent governance advice for your setting. NGA's service is also available to academy committees/councils at an academy level. Visit the NGA website to find out more: nga.org.uk/GOLDline.

Research

NGA has produced a number of research reports which have highlighted the roles and responsibilities of governance professionals and the challenges they face. These include:

Putting a Price on Effective Clerking (2020)

Although the varying nature of governance professional roles and governing structures does not lend itself to a uniform pay structure, this research project provided credible recommendations that point to a proportionate and reasonable rate of remuneration for those clerks completing the role as defined in the NGA model job description.

Clerks' Pay and Employment Survey (2016)

In 2016, NGA carried out an extensive survey of clerks' pay and employment conditions, receiving over 1,400 responses and revealing significant variations in pay and conditions.

The entire suite of NGA research can be found at: nga.org.uk/research.

NGA guides

NGA's Welcome to Governance and Welcome to a Multi Academy Trust help those governing, and the governance professionals supporting them, to understand their roles and responsibilities. They are useful both as an induction guide for new volunteers and a reference guide for more experienced governors/trustees.

Details of how to purchase NGA guides can be found here: nga.org.uk/publications.

NGA's bespoke consultancy and professional development service

NGA consultants undertake external reviews of governance for boards and trusts of all sizes, providing an astute diagnosis of the areas where improvement should be focused and realistic recommendations that will rapidly effect change. Our professional development service extends to offering training bespoke to your school/trust's governance structure, facilitated sessions on developing your vision and strategy and access to governance expertise on an ongoing basis. Contact www.consultancy@nga.org.uk for an introductory conversation.

Governing board membership

Join over 75,000 members who already trust our expertise

Sign up to access a range of resources that will support your board to develop the right skills and knowledge.

GOLD governing board membership £278

- Access to NGA GOLDline for expert, confidential and independent governance advice
- Complimentary copies of Welcome to Governance for all new governors/trustees
- A complimentary copy of The Chair's Handbook
- NEW: access to virtual Welcome to Governance sessions for new governors/trustees
- Copies of Governing Matters magazine to every governor/trustee and a copy to the school
- Access to members-only content in our online Knowledge Centre
- A weekly e-newsletter featuring the latest education news and policy updates
- Free places at member conferences, events and networks
- NEW: free places at NGA governance leadership forums
- Access to NGA's webinar and podcast series
- National representation through lobbying and campaigns

Standard governing board membership £99

- NGA guides available at a discounted rate
- Copies of Governing Matters magazine three governors/trustees and a copy to the school
- Access to members-only content in our online Knowledge Centre
- A weekly e-newsletter featuring the latest education news and policy updates
- Free places at member conferences, events and networks
- NEW: free places at NGA governance leadership forums
- Access to NGA's webinar and podcast series
- National representation through lobbying and campaigns

Join us

0121 237 3780

www.nga.org.uk/membership

E-LEARNING **ANYTIME, ANYWHERE**

GOVERNORS | TRUSTEES | CHAIRS | CLERKS

E-learning to help governors, trustees, chairs and clerks develop their governance skills and knowledge.

With over 50 high-quality e-learning modules, and bitesize 'just in time' modules, Learning Link provides flexible e-learning anytime, anywhere.

Our clerking modules will help new and experienced clerks to get a better understanding of their role and how to carry it out well.

Our e-learning collections include structures, roles and responsibilities; good governance; vision, ethos and strategic direction; pupil success and wellbeing; executive leaders; the best use of resources; compliance; clerking; MATs and much more.

Type of NGA membership	Learning Link price
NONE	£165
GOLD	£169 £85
STANDARD	£169 £125

Discounts are available for group purchases of Learning Link.

Start your free trial today and preview a selection of our modules.

0121 237 3780

www.nga.org.uk/learninglink