

HFL EDUCATION CLERKING SERVICE INFORMATION PACK

– HFL CLERK TO GOVERNORS ROLE

Thank you for your interest in becoming a School Governing Board Clerk for HFL Education. This information sheet provides some background to the work of governors and the role of the clerk, as well as details on how the role operates.

OUR COMPANY

HFL Education (HFL) is an award-winning provider of products and services to schools and educational settings within and outside Hertfordshire. We believe that every young person, through access to a great education, should be able to realise their potential, regardless of where they live or their circumstances.

We focus on supporting the schools we work with to achieve successful long-term outcomes for their children. HFL is majority owned by Hertfordshire schools and operates with a not-for-profit ethos.

CLERKING SERVICE

Our highly regarded clerking service provides governing boards with a named clerk to support board and committee meetings in line with a settings subscription of meetings. Our service supports all types of education settings, schools and trusts.

GOVERNING BOARDS AND THE ROLE OF THE CLERK

Governing Board

A governing board is a group of between 7 and 20+ people elected or appointed from the main stakeholders – parents, staff, the Local Authority and the local community – whose job is to promote high standards of educational achievement at the school.

A governing board is in legal terms a 'board corporate'. This status provides legal protection to its members. The governing board has three key roles: to be strategic, to act as a critical friend, and to be accountable.

A governing board is made up largely of lay people. Amongst other important tasks it appoints the Headteacher and other staff; and controls the school's budget.

Role of the Clerk

The Clerk to the Governing Board is accountable to the governing board/board of trustees, working effectively with the chair of governors, headteacher and other governors/trustees. The clerk is responsible for supporting the administration of meetings and advising the governing board on constitutional matters, duties and powers, and works within a legal framework. The HFL clerk role may differ to clerks currently working in a school based clerk role. The Clerking Officer at HFL will oversee the line

management of the HFL clerk with input from their governing board's Chair of Governors.

HFL CLERK: MAIN DUTIES

Full details of the clerk role is available in the accompanying job description and should be read in conjunction with the document, [DfE Clerking Competency Framework](#)

Organisation and administration of meetings

- Liaise with the Chair and Headteacher two - three weeks before the meeting to draft the agenda.
- Prepare and circulate the agenda and supporting papers for meetings at least 7 calendar days (14 calendar days for Academies Members meetings) prior to the meeting.
- Attend governor meetings in person (or remotely if requested via MS Teams) usually during term time in line with a school's clerking subscription.
- Take accurate, concise minutes – showing clear governor discussion, decisions, strategic challenge and actions.
- Follow up matters arising from meetings attended as appropriate.

Advice and Guidance

- Provide advice and guidance to the governing board on procedural matters and best practice.
- Keep up to date with governance legislation by reading recommended governance publications and by attending termly clerks' briefings.
- Clerks will need to get familiar with the different types of governance for schools, academies and multi academy trusts.

Membership/Organisation

Using the platform GovernorHub

- Maintain an up-to-date list of members of the governing board and of their terms of office.
- Maintain governing boards calendar of meetings.
- Create and maintain organised meeting folders.
- Record meeting attendance.
- Advise on governor vacancies, ensuring that the board keeps within their legal constitution.

Relationships

Develop and maintain a professional working relationship with the chair, headteacher and the governing board.

Training and development

Commit to participate to relevant training and development.

- Clerk Induction – online modules and remote sessions
- Termly briefings
- Internal Clerk Development Programme
- Additional training if wanting to support school complaints and exclusions.

WORKING FOR HFL

Contract and salary

Clerks are employed on a variable hours contract and are paid on a per meeting fee, which includes all tasks before, during and after the meeting. Options available for those that would prefer to be self-employed.

Fees paid to clerks are based on the type of school and the type of meeting of clerked.

There are two salary bands, level 1 is paid to new and developing clerks. Level 2 is paid to clerks who have successfully completed the Clerks' Development Programme or national equivalent. Full salary details will be provided during stage 1 interviews.

Claims and Expenses

Clerks are paid by submitting monthly/half termly invoices to the clerking team, once the minutes for a meeting have been drafted and sent to the Chair of Governors. Clerks who are employed on a variable hours contract will be advised of payroll cut off dates and pay days.

HFL operate a policy of Working from Anywhere. Meaning that all HFL employees will have 'Hertfordshire' listed as their place of employment. Business mileage (current rate £0.25 a mile) is claimable for all travel within the Hertfordshire area.

HFL are committed to reducing our carbon footprint and all governance papers are produced and shared electronically. Clerks are asked to minimise their printing and only access supporting meeting papers online where possible. The meeting fee has allowed for minimal individual printing costs, and additional expenses will not be paid for any individual printing costs. The exception to this, is where a clerk is supporting a complaint/exclusion and the panel has requested the clerk produces a printed pack (NB: this service is usually provided by the school).

IT and Email

HFL Clerks will need to supply their own IT equipment in order to fulfil the role. As meetings may be organised remotely, it would be recommended that your IT has a working camera, microphone and speaker. Although not compulsory, many clerks prefer to type the minutes during the meeting, rather than take notes and write up.

Clerks will be supplied with a HFL office 365 account. The account provides the clerk with an email, one drive account for storing documents, access to word, excel and MS

Teams. The HFL email must be used for all HFL business purposes and communication with schools. All clerks will have a MS teams account created as part of the HFL organisation.

Induction, Training and Mentoring

HFL Clerks are provided with free access to HFL clerk and governance training. Clerks are not paid an additional fee to attend training.

All newly appointed clerks are required to attend an online induction (currently 09.30 – 14.30), as well as accessing relevant online modules and reading of relevant governance documents. In addition clerks must commit to attending termly briefings (sessions are repeated over two sessions – Wednesday evening/Monday morning during November, March and June). Further development training sessions are provided to support clerking of exclusions and complaints. All training is supplied remotely.

Newly appointed clerks are mentored by the Clerking Officer, to ensure that they have a good understanding of the requirements of the role. This will include giving advice and support in drafting agendas and in building effective relationships with the governing board, as well as making sure the minutes meet the expected standard.

Some newly appointed clerks have found it beneficial to shadow a meeting first before clerking their first meeting. This will be discussed at appointment.

Deployment

HFL clerks are appointed to serve the governing board at specific schools. Schools sign up to a set clerking subscription for a specific number of meetings for 12 months. Clerks will be advised of this subscription before deployment and following the contract renewal period.

Successfully appointed clerks are usually deployed to schools within their local districts. New clerks will be advised of positions available at point of offer. Additional vacancies are promoted to the clerking bank throughout the year and are shared out according to the location, and particular needs of that board.

To provide a measure of stability for governing boards, newly appointed clerks are expected to provide a commitment of not less than one year's service, and to give at least one term's notice of resignation. However, this would be subject to review at an earlier date if for some reason the appointment proved not to be appropriate.

There will be opportunities to cover additional meetings. Allocation of cover will be shared fairly in accordance with clerk location and any necessary skillsets required.

If there has been an extended period of time whereby a clerk has not worked, then the

clerk may be subject to a termination of contract.

Independent working/access to knowledge and support

Although clerks will be attending schools for meetings. The majority of their time will be as independent workers preparing for and following up governance meetings.

As a HFL clerk you are not isolated in your role. You will be directed to reference information to read. But you will also have access to the following support, to help you build your knowledge and experience of governance best practice:

- Mentoring by clerking officer and support by clerking team
- Governance helpdesk via email and phone during business hours – here you will be able to get advice on statutory matters
- Knowledge – access to our knowledge area on GovernorHub which has helpful governance articles and templates
- HFL clerks' portal – access to shared clerks documents via GovernorHub which can be accessed at your convenience.
- Clerks' Handbook –an e-document available via the Clerks Portal.
- Suggested agenda items – supplied termly
- Termly clerks' briefings
- Governance termly newsletter

Loyalty Clause

Clerks that are employed on variable hours contracts are unable to provide clerking services independently of HFL. Additional requests should be directed back to the clerking team.

Exceptions will be allowed for work/contracts that commenced prior to appointment as a HFL clerk - please advise in your application if this applies to you.

Safeguarding

HFL will arrange a basic DBS for all HFL clerks during the appointment stage. All clerks will be provided with a Photo ID badge that must be worn to all HFL work commitments.

Clerks' Development Programme

All new HFL clerks are expected to enrol on the HFL Clerks' Development Programme (CDP) and commit to completing within 12 to 24 months. The CDP is an internal programme to help develop clerks' understanding of the role. CDP is an evidence-based programme and involves the clerk working independently to complete. It is designed to document development within the clerking role and is a great self-evaluation tool.

Clerks are supported through the programme via an induction meeting (group) and two further 1:1 sessions (optional) for up to 30 minutes each.

Once successfully achieved clerks move up to level 2 pay banding.

COMPETENCIES/JOB DESCRIPTION

Newly appointed clerks are not expected to be able to provide the same level of advice as those who have been serving for many years. However, by attending training, reading relevant governance documents and collaborating with the network of support they will quickly be able to develop into a knowledgeable and effective clerk.

The following lists the competencies expected of an experienced clerk and that a new clerk should be working towards. Please see also the enclosed Job Description.

No.	Competencies	Skills & Abilities
1.	Skills, knowledge & Aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• good listening, oral and literacy skills• able to write agendas and record accurate and concise minutes• ICT (including keyboard) skills and video meetings• able to organise own time and work to deadlines• able to organise meetings• able to keep records, retrieve and disseminate information• able to use the internet• able to learn and understand relevant legislation, guidance and procedures• commitment to equal opportunities
2.	Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• willing to attend appropriate training and development• willingness to undertake the Clerks' Development Programme.• commitment to access and read governance resources
3.	Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• having worked in an environment where taking initiative and self-motivation were expected• having worked as a member of a team
4.	Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• integrity• able to maintain confidentiality• able to remain impartial• a flexible approach to working hours• willing to learn• able to adapt to change• good interpersonal skills
5.	Special requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• able to work at times convenient to the governing body, including evenings• able to travel to meetings• available to be contacted at mutually agreed times.