

# Skills audit for governors based on the DfE competency framework

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- Use this KeyDoc to help you consider your own confidence with regard to the 6 key competencies in the [Department for Education's competency framework for governance](#). You can also use this to identify any potential areas for training and development.
- This audit can be used as part of your governing board's self-evaluation.
- You'll be asked to rate your confidence against a series of statements in the following areas:
  - Strategic leadership
  - Accountability for educational standards and financial performance
  - People
  - Structures
  - Compliance
  - Evaluation

## Strategic leadership

SETTING DIRECTION			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
National and local education policy and news			
What the key features of good governance should be			
The difference between strategic and operational decisions			
How to carry out strategic planning, and what tools you need to do this			
CAN YOU...?			
Think strategically about your school's development			
Explain your school's strategic priorities and goals, and how these will be monitored			
Champion the reasons for changes, and explain how these benefit the school's community			

CULTURE, VALUES AND ETHOS			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Your school's values and ethos			
Your school's strategic improvement plan			
Your governing body's code of conduct, and how it reflects the school's vision and ethos			
CAN YOU...?			
Act in a way that reflects your school's culture and values, and ensure that policies are in line with these			
Agree the school's distinctive characteristics and culture			

DECISION MAKING			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Identify the decisions that are likely to achieve your school's goals			
Put aside your own interests to make decisions in the best interests of the school			

DECISION MAKING			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Act with honesty, objectivity, and integrity			
Ensure that your decisions are well-informed and impartial			
Recognise when your governing body will require external advice			
Stand by the decisions of the governing body, and respect collective decision making			
Accept challenge, and encourage open discussions			

COLLABORATIVE WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Who your main stakeholders are			
How to work with stakeholders, and members of the school community			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Proactively consult with a range of views, and welcome feedback and challenge			
Work with other organisations where necessary			
Be clear, honest and open when communicating with parents, pupils and staff			
Consider how the decisions governors make affect the school community			
Act as an ambassador for your school			
Support community cohesion, and challenge your school's leadership team to do the same			

RISK MANAGEMENT			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
What risk management is, and how it applies to your school			
How risks are managed in your school, and how concerns are escalated			
How conflicts of interest, and breaches in confidentiality, lead to risks for the school			

RISK MANAGEMENT			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Identify the main risks facing your school, and the contingency measures that are in place			
Ensure that your school's risk management systems are robust, and regularly reviewed			
Advise on how to achieve the right balance of risk, and how to mitigate the impact of risks			
Actively avoid and manage conflicts of interest			

## Accountability for educational standards and financial performance

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
How teaching and learning is evaluated in your school			
The importance of a broad and balanced curriculum			
How the curriculum in your school promotes the school's ethos and values			
Relevant national standards and assessment systems for your school			
The rationale behind your school's assessment procedures			
How behaviour and safety are monitored in your school			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Set expectations for school improvement with your school leadership team (SLT)			
Let your SLT know what data you need to fulfil your role			
Request evidence of the effectiveness of proposed improvement initiatives			

RIGOROUS ANALYSIS OF DATA			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
The DfE's performance tables and school comparison tool			
RAISEonline for school and pupil data			
Your school's context on a local and national basis			
Where the data you receive comes from and is quality assured			
Information about attendance and exclusion in your school			
How you should use a range of sources of information, such as guidance parents or staff members			

RIGOROUS ANALYSIS OF DATA			
CAN YOU...?			
Analyse and interpret data to evaluate how pupils in your school are performing			
Use data to inform decisions about school improvement			
Challenge the SLT to ensure that the data you receive is valuable and efficiently collected			

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORKS AND ACCOUNTABILITY			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Your school's financial policies, funding arrangements and methods of assuring financial accountability			
Your school's internal control processes, and how value for money is secured			
Your school's financial health and efficiency, and how it compares with other schools			
CAN YOU...?			
Be confident in the financial information you receive			

**FINANCIAL FRAMEWORKS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

<b>DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
Interpret budget monitoring information, and communicate this to others			
Take part in financial self-evaluation activities			
Rigorously question how the school is approaching financial efficiency			

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING**

<b>DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
How your school receives funding, and how this funding is spent			
The importance of a robust financial strategy and plans to ensure sustainability			
How your school allocates resources, and how these translate into outcomes for pupils			
How the budget is set and monitored			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Make decisions about funding, based on your school's priorities			
Interpret data relating to finances			
Ask informed questions about income and spending			

**STAFFING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

<b>DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>MAYBE</b>
What your school spends on staffing, and how to benchmark this against other schools			
How staff are recruited			
How staff performance management and pay progression works in your school			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Ensure that staffing structures are fit for purpose			

STAFFING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	MAYBE
Take responsibility for maintaining a robust pay policy			
Be confident in how you apply procedures to the performance management of senior staff members			
Identify how pay decisions will affect the budget			
Have due regard to the work-life balance of staff members			

EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	MAYBE
The purpose of formal scrutiny and accountability (for example, by Ofsted)			
How national performance measures are monitored and reported, and the minimum standards at which intervention is triggered			
CAN YOU...?			
Ensure appropriate structures are in place to support external scrutiny			
Ensure that the board is open and accessible to members of the school community			
Use your understanding of data to inform responses to external scrutiny			

## People

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM			
CAN YOU...?	YES	NO	MAYBE
Show your commitment to your role through active participation			
Find the information you need to support you in your role			
Accept constructive challenge and feedback			
Raise doubts and differences of opinions in an appropriate way, and encourage others to do the same			
Acknowledge your mistakes, and the lessons learnt from these			

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM			
CAN YOU...?	YES	NO	MAYBE
Influence others, and build consensus through persuasion			
Demonstrate professional ethics and values, and sound judgement			
Recognise the importance of the clerk's position and advice			

## Structures

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
The role of the board, and its three core functions			
How the strategic role of governance is different to operational leadership			
<b>For academies</b> , the role of members and how this is different to the role of trustees			
The governance structure of your school, and how decisions are delegated			
How the governing body and its committees are constituted			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Help your governing body design a committee structure that is appropriate to your school, and make changes where appropriate			

## Compliance

STATUTORY AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
The governing body's legal, regulatory and financial duties			
The importance of having regard to statutory guidance, such as the Governance Handbook			



STATUTORY AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
The governing body's obligations under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and employment legislation</li> <li>• For academies, the Academies Financial Handbook and their own funding agreements</li> <li>• Equalities and health and safety legislation</li> <li>• Data protection and freedom of information legislation</li> </ul>			
The governing body's duties with relation to safeguarding and the Prevent Duty			
The governing body's duties with regard to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)			
Your instrument of government, or in academies, your articles of association			
Your school's whistleblowing policy, and how these relate to the governing body's responsibilities			
The importance of observing the school's policies, for example with regard to parental complaints			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Speak out when you are concerned about non-compliance			
Explain the governing body's legal responsibilities			
Recognise when the governing body may need specialist advice			

## Evaluation

MANAGING REVIEW AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Your own strengths and areas for development			
<b>CAN YOU...?</b>			
Be 'outward facing', and learn from others			
Maintain your own personal development plan			

MANAGING REVIEW AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT			
DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Be ready to accept opportunities for training and development			
Accept a wide range of feedback, and use this to inform your development			
Carry out self-reviews, and reflect on your own performance			

MANAGING AND DEVELOPING THE BOARD'S EFFECTIVENESS			
CAN YOU...?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Evaluate how the governing body's decisions affect pupil outcomes			
Use feedback from inspections to inform decisions about the governing body's development			
Contribute to the board's self-evaluation			