

**All Wales Centre for  
Governor Training and Research**

**GOVERNING BODY  
CLERKING SERVICES  
IN WALES**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This study, undertaken by the All Wales Centre of Excellence for Governor Training and Research, was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to “research existing training provisions for (governing body) clerks”. The purpose of the study was to provide an information base from which “recommendations on the provisions of a cohesive and comprehensive clerk-training programme for use by LEAs in Wales” might be made.

1.2 The present legislation requires that full governing body meetings be clerked, and also the statutory committees, i.e. staff dismissal committee, staff dismissal appeals committee, pupil discipline committee, and admissions committee. At present, non-statutory committees do not have to be clerked. However, new regulations are likely to allow greater delegation of work by governing bodies to committees if they wish. If this happens, it will be necessary for such committees to be clerked if they are to ensure the effective running of governing body business and enhance governing body input to school improvement.

At present, there is a wide variety in governing body clerking practices across LEAs in Wales. In those LEAs where clerking is provided by LEA officials, payment by schools to the LEA for this service is based on Service Level Agreements which list the services provided with costs. These costs are based on the number of meetings clerked and the length in time for such meetings. There is also evidence that LEA clerks, in addition to minute taking, are able to offer advice on procedural issues and can either advise on legal issues or have access to information which can provide help for governing bodies on legal matters, which some of them do even if this does not appear in the Service Level Agreement.

School governing bodies which do not avail themselves of LEA clerking, or are in LEAs which do not provide a clerking service, must provide their own. The level of service provided by clerks in this case varies from minute taking only to the provision of minute taking plus advising on procedural issues, depending on the clerk’s job description and the ability and experience of the clerk.

The role of the governing body clerk as an accurate minute taker, an adviser to the Chair on procedural matters, and a potential conduit for advice on legal issues, is increasingly being recognised, and it is equally clear that appropriate training for clerks is needed if these functions are to be carried out effectively to assist governing bodies to carry out their roles effectively and efficiently.

1.3 The findings of this study are based on information from:

- A questionnaire survey (Appendix 1) sent to Governor Support Officers in all 22 Welsh unitary authorities in November 2003.
- Headteacher response to a request for their views on the role and importance of governing body clerks in May 2004. Five responses were received.

- Research undertaken by Governors Wales Development Officers with governors in Welsh schools in the winter of 2003-4.

1.4 This study is divided into two sections:

Part 3 (pages 4 to 10) considers the provision of service by LEAs which clerk school governing bodies.

Part 4 (pages 11 to 13) considers the provision of service by LEAs which either do not provide a clerking service to schools, or whose offer of such a provision is not taken up by their schools.

## **2 PROVISION OF CLERKING TO GOVERNING BODIES**

- 2.1 Of the 22 LEAs in Wales, 4 provide a clerking service for all their schools; 7 do not provide a clerking service at all (the reason for this is largely one of staffing within the LEA); while 11 provide a clerking service for some schools only.

In this last group, most of the 11 LEAs offer clerking services to schools, but their offers are not always accepted, with some schools making their own clerking arrangements. In one authority, for instance, all schools purchase the LEA's clerking service, with the exception of two voluntary-aided secondary and two voluntary-aided primary schools. In another, the LEA clerks all governing bodies, with the exception of 1 primary and 6 comprehensive schools (the LEA reports that the reason for this is historical and dates back to before local government reorganisation); in a third authority community primary schools only are clerked by the LEA, though voluntary-aided primary schools also have their own clerking arrangements.

2.2	Number of LEAs providing a clerking service to all their schools	4
	Number of LEAs providing a clerking service to some of their schools	11
	Number of LEAs not providing a clerking service for any of their schools	7

### 3 LEAS WHICH PROVIDE A CLERKING SERVICE TO THEIR SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

#### 3.1 PERSONNEL

##### 3.1.1 Personnel in the 4 LEAs providing a clerking service for all their schools

It is inevitable that the 4 LEAs in Wales which provide a clerking service for all their schools have to rely on an input into this area by officials who are not members of the Governor Support team, although all the officials used for governing body clerking by all LEAs in Wales are Education Department members.

One LEA receiving such support has 17 officials (including Governor Support Officers) clerking governors meetings. A second LEA involves 25 officials in total in clerking, a third 22, while the fourth uses 10 officials. Interestingly, this last LEA has taken on two additional part-time members of staff solely for clerking governing bodies, who are paid for the hours they work. Currently, one of these part-timers clerks three schools and the other part-timer (a recent appointment) clerks one.

The number of governing bodies clerked by LEA staff as a result of these arrangements can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1: Number of governing bodies clerked by LEA staff in LEAs which provide clerking for all their schools

	No. of officials involved in clerking		Average no. of governing bodies clerked by each Governor Support Team member and other officials
	Governor Support Team members	Other LEA Officials	
LEA 1	2	17	2
LEA 2	4	25	2
LEA 3	2	22	2
LEA 4	3	10 (+ 2 part-time)	6

These figures are averages and it is likely that members of Governor Support teams will clerk above the average figure, while other officials will clerk below the average. In one of the LEAs listed in Table 1, for example, officials who are not members of the Governor Support team clerk 6 meetings on average, while Governor Support Officers clerk 11 or 12, so clearly the bulk of governing body clerking remains with Governor Support staff.

It is also the practice in these authorities for individual clerks to service schools in both the primary and secondary sectors, and not specialise in one or the other.

### 3.1.2 Personnel in the 11 LEAs providing clerking for some schools only

This group covers a range of clerking service provision. This provision varies considerably, from one LEA which clerks 4 primary schools only, to another which clerks all schools with the exception of 2 voluntary-aided primary schools and 2 voluntary-aided comprehensives.

Because of the lack of take-up of service, the 11 LEAs in this category have fewer schools to clerk than in those LEAs that provide a clerking service to all schools. It is possible in 3 of the 11 LEAs for staff to provide the service entirely from their Governor Support Team. These 3 LEAs have larger Governor Support Teams than most Welsh LEAs of comparable size but, even so, the average number of governing bodies clerked by Governor Support Officers in these LEAs is higher than LEAs where officials outside Governor Support Teams are used. See Table 2 and compare with Tables 1 and 3.

Table 2: Number of governing bodies clerked by LEAs using staff from Governor Support Team only

	No. of Governor Support Team members involved in clerking	Average no. of governing bodies clerked by GST members
LEA 5	7	19
LEA 6	5 full time, 3 part-time	14
LEA 7	11	15

The remaining 8 of the 11 LEAs in this category for the most part have fewer officials outside Governor Support Teams involved in the delivery of the clerking service than in those 4 LEAs which provide a clerking service for all their schools (see Table 1). The extent to which such “outsiders” are utilised is reflected in the average number of governing bodies clerked by each individual. See Table 3.

Table 3. Average number of governing bodies clerked by LEA officials (in addition to Governor Support staff) in LEAs which provide clerks for some of their schools only

	No. of officials involved in clerking		Average no. of governing bodies clerked by Governor Support Team members and non-GST members
	Governor Support Team members	Other LEA officials	
LEA 8	1	13	5
LEA 9	6	12	8
LEA 10	3	8	8
LEA 11	1	1	4
LEA 12	3	3	6
LEA 13	5	6	6
LEA 14	3	3	3
LEA 15	3	1	3

There is a very wide variation in the number of officials outside Governor Support Teams across these LEAs. (13 in LEA 8 and 1 in both LEAs 11 and 15.) This is explained by the relatively few numbers of governing bodies availing themselves of LEA clerking services in some LEAs (e.g. LEAs 8, 12, 14 and 15) when compared with other LEAs where the uptake of LEA clerking services is higher (e.g. LEAs 8, 9 and 10).

These figures are averages, and in most LEAs Governor Support Team members clerk more governing body meetings than other LEA officials. In one LEA, for example, Governor Support Team members clerk, on average, 5 schools while other LEA officials clerk 1 or 2 schools.

In 4 of the 8 LEAs in Table 3, where clerking is provided for both primary and secondary schools, individual clerks work in both primary and secondary school sectors, while in the remaining 4 LEAs there is a degree of specialisation with some clerks specialising in either the primary or secondary sector.

### 3.1.3 Conclusions

Clerking provision for school governing bodies varies widely across LEAs in Wales. The clearest distinction is between those LEAs providing clerking services for all their schools and those which provide a service for some only. However, there are wide variations in the latter category, with one LEA providing a clerking service for only 4 schools (and this service is provided only because the said schools have had difficulty in finding their own clerk), and those where the vast majority of schools are serviced by their LEA.

The majority of LEAs (12 out of 15) who provide clerking services for schools involve officials who are not in Governor Support Teams (though they are in the Education Department) in the provision of their clerking service. This affects the number of schools clerked by each individual involved in the service, and the number is lower than those LEAs which run their clerking service entirely by their Governor Support Team. However, concern has been expressed by both governors and a Head over the number of schools which are clerked by individual LEA officials, and how they perceive it affects their service to governing bodies. One Chair of Governors commented “[draft minutes] can take up to 6 weeks to come out”; another expressed concern over clerks “[producing] stereotype minutes, inaccurately reporting meeting”; and finally, a Headteacher felt that “clerks should also have some regular contact with school to ensure good communication is achieved.”

### 3.1.4 Recommendations

Given the importance of governing body clerking, and the time required to gain the knowledge of individual schools and their governing bodies required to fulfil this role to greatest advantage, it is recommended that LEAs limit the number of governing bodies individual officials should clerk. They may wish to consider using a larger number of other LEA officials to clerk governing body meetings, or employing governing body clerks on a part-time basis.

## 3.2 MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLERKING

3.2.1 As the statistics in Tables 4 and 5 below show, the monitoring and evaluation of their work by LEAs which provide a clerking service to their schools is extremely limited. Six of the 15 LEAs which provide this service have no formal methods in place to monitor their provision, while of the remaining 9 LEAs which undertake formal monitoring, 4 use only one method. It is rather surprising that evaluation forms which are relatively cheap to produce and easy to administer are used by only 5 of the 9 authorities.

Table 4. Types of Methods used by the 15 LEAs providing a clerking service to schools to monitor and evaluate the quality of their clerking service.

Method of Monitoring and Evaluation	Number of LEAs using this method:	
	who clerk all their schools	who clerk some schools only
No monitoring undertaken	1	5
Evaluation forms completed at regular intervals by governing bodies	1	4
Meetings between LEA officers and Chairs of Governors	2	3
Observation of meetings by LEAS officers	1	2
Monitoring of minutes	1	1

Table 5. Number of formal methods used by LEAs to monitor the quality of their clerking services

Number of methods used	Number of LEAs:	
	who clerk all their schools	who clerk some schools only
No monitoring undertaken	1	5
1 method of monitoring used	2	3
2 methods of monitoring used		2
3 methods of monitoring used	1	1

### 3.2.2 Conclusion

Monitoring the quality of clerking services by LEAs which provide these services is very limited in the number of the LEAs which carry out this function and, to a lesser extent, in the number of methods employed. This can make it difficult for LEAs to improve their service. More formal and frequent monitoring arrangements can also help LEAs pick up potential clerking problems and possibly intervene at an early stage to prevent the problem escalating.

Although both Heads and Governors report favourably of the clerking service they receive from their LEAs - “the clerk to the governing body is most satisfactory” (governor), “the service and relationship between the clerk and the governing body is excellent” (governor), “our clerk to the governors is particularly good” (Headteacher) - there may be areas of concern which could be addressed if they were picked up through monitoring the clerking service. A particular concern which has been highlighted by a number of both governors and Headteachers is the question of impartiality of LEA clerks. “When a governing body comes into conflict with the LEA, the clerk is put in an invidious position and obviously their loyalties will lie with their employer” (governor). “They must have divided loyalties on some issues” (governor). “LEA agenda items (are) added without consultation with Chair” (Headteacher). “The downside could be that you may not get an impartial view from the clerk” (Headteacher). The last respondent, though, also refers to the advantages of an LEA provided clerking service: “useful in clarifying procedures (and) in seeking clarification for things ...They will be aware of common problems and relay them to those who make decisions.”

An effective monitoring system would have picked up these perceptions of a clerking service and measures could then have been taken to remedy the situation.

### 3.2.3 Recommendation

In order that LEAs may gauge governor satisfaction with their clerking service, it is recommended that all LEAs providing clerking services to their schools should employ varied, regular and effective monitoring procedures.

### 3.3 TRAINING

- 3.3.1 All 4 LEAs which provide a clerking service for all their schools run their own training programmes, and of the 11 LEAs which provide a clerking service to some of their schools, 8 also run their own training programmes. See Table 6.

Table 6. LEA training provision for clerks

LEAs which provide training for clerks	12
LEAs which do not provide training, but encourage clerks to attend training courses run by other providers	2
LEAs which do not see this as an issue	1

Attendance at training courses, however, varies across LEAs in Wales. See Table 7.

Table 7. Attendance by LEA Governor Support Team members at formal clerk training courses\*

LEAs where Governor Support Team members have attended training sessions	9
LEAs whose Governor Support Team members have not attended training sessions	5

\* 1 LEA made no response in this area.

It would appear that a large number of LEA Governor Support Team members have received no training but, in fact, though there may be poor attendance at formal training sessions most LEAs run “clerks forums” where governing body clerks meet to receive updates on legal changes and also to discuss areas of common concern. At such meetings informal training takes place.

Of perhaps greater concern is the quality of training. One LEA respondent points to the limited value of training owing to a lack of differentiation and suggests training should be “specifically targeted at different levels” to correspond to the different levels of clerking expertise amongst Governor Support Team staff. Two governors also voice concerns over the quality of training. One points out that “... (some) clerks have said they do not attend (training) because of the standard of training offered”. A second observes on the expertise of a governing body clerk “I am afraid I have had - on several occasions - to question procedural guidance.” A Secondary Head, clearly aware of the importance of clerking to effective governance, is of the opinion that “a comprehensive clerk training programme is very much needed as their (clerks’) role in these matters (of good governance) should not be underestimated.” This view is supported by an LEA respondent who comments “a (national) training pack would be most useful.”

### 3.3.2 Conclusions

While LEAs are clearly committed to training, both formal and informal, for governing body clerks, there is some concern over attendance levels at formal training sessions. Some disquiet is also noted in the quality of training.

### 3.3.3 Recommendations

In order to ensure that governing body clerks across all LEAs in Wales have access to high quality differentiated training, it is recommended that a national training programme for governing body clerks should be produced.

In order to address the needs of both experienced and inexperienced clerks, the training programme should be tiered. Level One should be aimed at new clerks and concentrate on their secretarial duties, while Level Two should in addition cover the advisory role to governing bodies which clerks can perform. If both these roles are carried out to a high level by clerks, governing bodies will be in a strong position to maintain a high input to school improvement.

It is essential that governing body clerks receive regular updating on changes to legal requirements and also an opportunity to discuss matters of common concern, e.g. agenda setting, methods of minute taking and record keeping. It is therefore recommended that LEAs maintain the practice of holding “clerks’ forums” at regular intervals, ideally once a term, where these matters can be discussed.

#### 4 LEAS WHICH DO NOT PROVIDE A CLERKING SERVICE TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES, OR WHOSE OFFER OF SUCH PROVISION IS NOT TAKEN UP

The findings, conclusions and recommendations in this section apply to those LEAs which do not provide a clerking service for any of their schools (7 LEAs) and those LEAs whose offer to provide clerking has not been taken up by a number of their schools (11 LEAs).

##### 4.1 PERSONNEL

4.1.1 With regard to providing governing bodies with clerks' job descriptions, there appears to be a clear distinction between those LEAs which do not provide clerking services for their schools, and those which do. 6 of the 7 LEAs which do not provide a clerking service provide a job description for clerks, and all of the 7 LEAs in this category provide their governing bodies with salary guidelines for clerks. However, of the 11 LEAs which provide a clerking service, only 3 provide clerks' job descriptions for school governing bodies which do not avail themselves of the clerking service, while only 5 of these LEAs provide salary guidelines to their governing bodies which do not take up the LEAs clerking service.

Table 8: Provision of services offered by LEAs to schools who do not use LEA clerking service

	LEAs not providing clerking for schools (7)	LEAs which offer to provide clerking but it is not taken by all schools (11)
Provision of clerks job description	6	3
Provision of salary guidelines for clerks	7	5

##### 4.1.2 Conclusions

While LEAs which do not provide clerking services to the governing bodies almost universally give clerks' job descriptions and salary guidelines to governing bodies, this is by no means as widespread in those LEAs which provide a clerking service. A job description common to all governing body clerks would help guarantee at least a basic level of clerking service to all governing bodies, while the provision of salary guidelines for clerks would go some way to ensuring a standard payment to clerks for their work.

#### 4.1.3 Recommendation

All LEAs should provide job descriptions for governing body clerks and clerk salary guidelines to those schools which do not use LEA clerking services.

#### 4.2 MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLERKING

4.2.1 There again appears to be a difference in the number of LEAs which actively monitor clerking between those LEAs which provide no clerking service and those which provide a clerking service for some of their schools (compare Tables 9(a) and 9(b)). The former group seem to be more committed to monitoring. However, for both groups the method of monitoring is no more than reading governing body minutes and providing, as one LEA describes it, “advice and guidance where appropriate”. One LEA, in addition to scrutinising governing body minutes also discusses clerking matters with Chairs of governors; a second LEA carries out an annual audit of governors’ views.

Table 9(a): LEAs (7) providing clerking services for none of their schools

	Number of LEAs
LEAs which actively monitor the work of governing body clerks, e.g. monitoring the quality of minutes, evaluation forms	5
LEAs which provide schools with guidelines on monitoring the work of governing body clerks	1

Table 9(b): LEAs (11) which provide clerking service but some of their schools do not use the service

	Number of LEAs
LEAs which actively monitor the work of governing body clerks, e.g. monitoring the quality of minutes, evaluation forms	5
LEAs which provide schools with guidelines on monitoring the work of governing body clerks	0

#### 4.2.2 Conclusion

Monitoring of governing body clerking not provided by LEAs is very limited and consists largely of scrutinising governing body minutes only by LEA officers. Similarly, it is evident from the research that very little advice is given to governing bodies on how they might carry out their own monitoring.

#### 4.2.3 Recommendations

LEAs should adopt a more rigorous approach to the monitoring of clerking. It is recommended that a set of monitoring procedures be produced nationally to aid LEAs in carrying out this function. These might include a format for evaluation forms for governing bodies to comment on the quality of clerking.

#### 4.3 TRAINING

4.3.1 Of the 7 LEAs which do not provide a clerking service for any of their schools, 6 run clerk training courses while 1 informs governing bodies and their clerks of training available from other providers. Such providers include other LEAs and, more commonly, private providers.

Of the 11 LEAs which provide a clerking service for some of their schools, 9 run clerk training courses, while 2 inform governing bodies and their clerks of training available from other providers.

#### 4.3.2 Conclusions

It is clear that LEAs which do not provide a clerking service for their governing bodies, and those which provide a clerking service for some of their schools see training as an important issue and have a commitment to it.

#### 4.3.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that LEAs might continue to either provide, or maintain their support for, training for governing body clerks who are provided to governing bodies as part of an LEA clerking service. However, in order to ensure consistency, and an opportunity to amend in the light of changing circumstances, it would be far more beneficial if a national training package for clerks be produced. This should be offered at two levels. Level 1 should cover the secretarial role of the clerk and include such topics as agenda and meeting preparation and arrangement, minute taking, and information storage. Level 2 should cover the advisory role of the clerk and include such topics as meeting procedures, meeting deadlines, correspondence on behalf of the governing body, limits of the clerk's influence

## **5 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 There is a lack of consistency of approach to the provision and content of clerk training across Wales.
- 5.2 While most LEAs have a clear commitment to training for clerks, the quality of training sessions varies.
- 5.3 Attendance at clerk training courses varies across LEAs in Wales.
- 5.4 Most LEAs run “clerks’ forums” where updating on educational changes, legal requirements and exchange of ideas and practices takes place.
- 5.5 Not all LEAs provide job descriptions and salary guidelines to schools and, where provided, they vary from LEA to LEA.

## 6 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 A national, differentiated training programme which would ensure a consistent and cohesive approach should be available for all governing body clerks. The training should be provided at two levels. Level 1 should cover the secretarial role of the clerk and include such topics as agenda and meeting preparation and arrangement, minute taking and information storage. Level 2 should cover the secretarial and advisory roles of the clerk and include such topics as meetings procedures, deadline meeting, correspondence on behalf of the governing body and the limit of the clerk's influence.
- 6.2 "Clerk forums" should be continued in those LEAs which provide this service and introduced in those LEAs which do not. It is further recommended that the service is offered to all clerks, whether or not they are supplied to schools by the LEA. The emphasis at "clerk forums" should be on updating attendees on legislative and educational changes and the sharing of good practice.
- 6.3 All LEAs should provide clerk job descriptions to all schools, regardless of who provides the clerk for the governing body. Similarly, LEAs should supply salary guidelines for clerks to governing bodies which do not, for whatever reason, use a clerking service provided by the LEA. A suggested generic job description is provided at Appendix A which recognises the differing levels of support which a clerk can provide for a governing body.
- 6.4 LEAs should employ formal procedures to ensure the work of governing body clerks is monitored effectively either by the LEA or individual governing bodies. It is recommended that a set of monitoring procedures be produced nationally to aid LEAs and individual governing bodies in carrying out this function.
- 6.5 Those LEAs which provide a clerking service should limit the number of governing bodies clerked by each official in order that the clerk may be able to become familiar with and better understand the particular needs of "their" schools. This can be achieved by increasing the number of LEA officials who clerk governing bodies and/or employing governing body clerks on a part-time basis.

**All Wales Centre of Excellence for Governor Training and Research**

**TRAINING OF CLERKS TO GOVERNING BODIES**

**THE LEA**

Name of Local Education Authority .....

1 How many Primary and Secondary schools are in your LEA?

Primary ..... Secondary .....

2 How many members of staff are in your LEA Governor Support Unit?

Full-time ..... Part-time .....

3 How many members of your LEA's Governor Support Unit:

(a) Have no other responsibilities .....

(b) Have other responsibilities but their prime responsibility is for governor support .....

(c) Have some responsibility for governor support but their prime responsibility lies elsewhere .....

4 Does your LEA provide a clerking service for your schools' governing bodies?

- (a) Yes, all schools  **(please answer questions 5 to 16)**
- (b) No schools  **(please answer questions 17 to 24)**
- (c) Some schools only  **(please answer questions 5 to 24  
and specify reasons for clerking only some schools below)**

.....  
 .....

*Answer questions 5 to 16 if you ticked question 4 (a) or 4(c)*

**PERSONNEL**

5 Is clerking provided by members of your Governor Support Team only?

YES  NO

6 If you answered NO to question 5, how many officials, in addition to your Governor Support Team, clerk governing body meetings?

.....

7 On average, how many governing bodies are clerked by each of your officials?

.....

8 Do clerks specialise in one sector, or do they clerk both primary and secondary school governing bodies?

- (a) Primary only
- (b) Secondary only
- (c) Both sectors
- (d) Some clerks specialise in one area while others service both

**SERVICES**

9 Do you clerk governor committees as a part of the overall clerking service you provide?

- (a) YES, for all committees at no extra cost
- (b) YES, but only for certain committees (eg. pupil exclusion) at no extra cost
- (c) YES, for all committees but at an extra cost
- (d) YES, but only for certain committees at an extra cost
- (e) NO

10 As part of the clerking arrangements you have with your schools, do you provide any other services?

YES  NO

11 If you answered YES to question 10, please list the other services you provide as part of your clerking arrangements:

.....

.....

.....

**MONITORING**

12 Does your LEA have any formal methods of monitoring the quality of the clerking service you provide to schools?

- (a) None
- (b) Evaluation forms completed at regular intervals by governing bodies
- (c) Meeting(s) between LEA officers and Chairs of governing bodies
- (d) Observation of meetings by LEA officers
- (e) Other (please state)

.....

**TRAINING FOR CLERKS**

13 Does your LEA provide clerking training for officials who clerk governing bodies? (tick one)

- (a) LEA provides training for clerks
- (b) LEA does not provide training for clerks, but as a matter of course enrolls clerks on training programmes given by other providers
- (c) LEA does not provide training for clerks, but encourages clerks to attend training courses
- (d) LEA does not see this as an issue

14 Have you ever attended a training session for clerks?

- (a) Never  (c) More than once
- (b) Once

15 Have any of your LEA's Governor Support Unit attended a training session for clerks?

YES  NO

16 If you answered YES to question 15, please state how many members of staff have attended courses:

.....

*Answer questions 17 to 24 if you ticked 4 (b) or 4 (c)*

### PERSONNEL

17 Does your LEA provide model job description(s) for clerks to your schools?

YES

NO

18 Does your LEA provide guidance for your schools on desirable professional qualifications for governing body clerks?

YES

NO

19 Does your LEA provide salary guidelines for governing body clerks to your schools?

YES

NO

### MONITORING

20 Is your LEA involved actively in monitoring the work of governing body clerks?

YES

NO

21 If you answered YES to question 20, please explain briefly how it undertakes this role:

.....  
 .....

22 If you answered NO to question 20, does your LEA provide your schools with guidelines on monitoring the work of governing body clerks?

YES

NO

### TRAINING

23 Does your LEA provide training for governing body clerks? (tick one)

(a) LEA provides training for clerks

(b) LEA does not provide training for clerks, but informs schools of training available from other providers

(c) LEA does not see this as an issue

24 If your LEA provides training for clerks, have:

(a) All school clerks attended at least 1 training session

(b) 70% - 99% attended at least 1 training session

(c) 40% - 69% attended at least 1 training session

(d) 10% - 39% attended at least 1 training session

(e) 1% - 9% attended at least 1 training session

**GENERAL**

We would welcome any further comments you may wish to make on the topic of training for clerks to governing bodies:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire. Please return your completed form in the SAE provided by **18 December 2003** to:

Steve Gullick, Project Director  
All Wales Centre of Excellence for Governor Training and Research, Department of Education,  
University of Wales Swansea, Hendrefoelan SWANSEA SA2 7NB

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Email: [S.E.Gullick@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:S.E.Gullick@swansea.ac.uk)

**JOB DESCRIPTION:  
CLERK TO GOVERNING BODY**

Level 1 (Secretarial)

- 1 Under the direction of the Chair, prepare the agenda for governing body meetings.
- 2 Distribute written notice of governors' meetings, the agenda, and any accompanying papers (including minutes of the previous meeting) to members of the governing body, Head teacher (if he/she is not a governor) and, for county aided and controlled schools, the Director of Education, at least 7 days before the meeting.
- 3 Produce accurate minutes of governing body meetings within an agreed number of days of the meeting.
- 4 Ensure that all governors present at meetings sign an attendance book and the minutes of the previous meeting are signed as a true record by the Chair.
- 5 Arrange for the safe storage of governing body minutes and other relevant information.
- 6 Keep a record of all governors' business interests at the school.
- 7 Keep a record of the following:
  - Dates of governing body meetings if these have been agreed in advance.
  - Names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of governors
  - Record of governor attendance at meetings
  - List of governor vacancies
  - Categories of governor and terms of office
  - Governing body correspondence
  - Governors' annual report to parents
  - Membership of governing body committees
  - Terms of reference of governing body committees
  - Minutes of committee meetings
  - Membership of any working parties
- 8 Produce draft correspondence for the governing body as requested.
- 9 At the first meeting of the governing body of the academic year, Chair the meeting until a new Chair has been elected.
- 10 Arrange for the election of a Chair and Vice-Chair of the governing body at the first meeting of the academic year.
- 11 Inform the LEA of any changes to the governing body.

Level 2: Advisory

- 12 Advise the Chair and governing body on meeting procedures.
- 13 Advise the Chair on such matters as governor attendance at meetings, meeting deadlines, items for the annual report to parents, the establishment of statutory governing body committees, etc.
- 14 Establish a network of contacts, e.g. LEA Governor Support teams, various governing body helplines, etc. and acquire such references as “The School Governors’ Guide to the Law” to ensure governing body activities are effective and within the law.
- 15 Undertake regular training to update skills and knowledge, especially of government regulations and legislation affecting school governance.

This job description does not stipulate the number of governing body meetings a clerk should attend as this figure might vary from LEA to LEA or school to school.