

Diocese of Westminster: Academy Conversion Programme Summary Overview for Governing Boards (April 2017)

1. Informal exploration by Governing Board and school leaders

Governing Board informally agree to explore option of becoming an academy within a Catholic Academy Trust

Action: Review Academy Strategy Documentation on diocese website.

Date Action taken:

Governing Board Due Diligence on what Academy Status means

Action: create a working group to explore becoming an academy trust looking at areas including curriculum & school performance, finance and property, staffing and governance.

Date Action taken:

Working group provides initial report to governing board

Action: Agree whether to register an interest in becoming an academy

Date Action taken:

2. Expressing an interest through to academy order

Register interest with DfE and **obtain DfE advice** on next stages of process **& let the Diocese know as soon as you have expressed interest.**

Action: https://form.education.gov.uk/fform.php?self=1&form_id=FitANgky23M&noLoginPrompt=1

Date Action taken:

Governing Board to pass resolution to investigate academy status

Action: Propose minute should be carefully minuted and expressed to be conditional upon further Governing Board, Diocesan and other approvals and upon agreement of the specific documentation
See example minute in Academy Conversion Pack

Date Action taken:

Obtain conditional consents from Diocese and RO and any further advice required at this stage

Action: Submit Due Diligence Forms to the Academy Project Board Word document and Excel spreadsheet available on diocesan website Academy section. If Order school, obtain consent from Religious Superior.

Date Action taken:

Prepare to Inform staff, parents, pupils and your local authority that you are considering becoming an academy a part of the due diligence and consultation process.

Action: send letter, create Academy conversion area on website
See example letter in Academy Conversion pack

Date Action taken:
<p>Academy Project Board and Education Commission Approval to move forward Action: Chair of Governors to submit application to convert to DfE on line will need to create account with DfE https://form.education.gov.uk/build/fillform.php?self=1&&form_id=qxvrr4gQioH&ShowMsg=1&skipExtraPage=1&form_name=Academy%20conversion%20application%20form&noRegister=false&ret=/MyServices&blackListId=qxvrr4gQioH&isBlacklisted=1&1 Example of forms available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-conversion-application-forms</p>
Date Action taken:
<p>Governing Board to draw up and agree consultation proposals Action: Agree consultation timeframe See example letter and questionnaire on Academy Conversion pack</p>
Date Action taken:
<p>Initial discussions with solicitors as required Action: Formal appointment to take place after academy order granted</p>
Date Action taken:
<p>Local Government Pension Scheme notify L.A and seek guidance Action: Actuarial assessment of pension contributions academy trust would be responsible for</p>
Date Action taken:
<p>Academy order granted by DfE Action: support grant released £25,000 and indicative funding allocation letter provided to review</p>
Date Action taken:
3. Consultations
<p>Governing Board to formally consult on plans to become academy trust with anyone who has interest in school (including staff, parents, pupils and wider local community). Actions :Documents published /Consultation meetings /Consultation feedback considered by Governing Board to determine response. (Consultation must be completed before signature of funding agreement.)</p>
Date Action taken:
<p>TUPE informative process to be conducted (after academy order grant) Action: TUPE letter / TUPE meeting with legal advice on letter and documentation See example letter and questionnaire on Academy Conversion pack</p>

Date Action taken:

4. Establishing the Catholic academy trust and agreeing the legal documents

Documentation for approval Academy Project Board templates must be followed

Action: **Memorandum and Articles of Association**

Master Funding Agreement applying to all academies in the trust

Supplemental Funding Agreements for each academy within the trust.

Church Supplemental Agreement for all Catholic schools

Lease/other property documents as required for the different academies

Commercial Transfer Agreement for each academy

Scheme of Delegation for each academy

Service level agreements with providers

Date Action taken:

Appointment of Members and Directors and provisional appointment of Local Governing Committee members

Action: Notifications to Companies House

Date Action taken:

5. Transferring responsibility to the academy trust

Final consents given

Action: Read Academy Financial Handbook , finalise banking, insurance and appoint auditors. Apply for Diocese's conditional consent to become unconditional.

Date Action taken:

Completion of relevant documentation and TUPE process.

Action: Issue relevant letters and notifications, see examples in Academy Conversion pack

Date Action taken:

Completing necessary registrations/filings

Action: making necessary notifications DfE, Information Commissioner, Edubase, exam boards etc

Date Action taken:

Confirming policies and procedures

Action: CAT policy review for Academy status

Date Action taken:

Websites to go live/ Email headers updated/Stationary updated

Action: Update for new status and legal compliance for CAT

Date Action taken: