

MEMBERSHIP OF AGBIS

Reference: AGBIS publication 'Guidelines for Governors'

1. A school wishing to join AGBIS should submit an application which will be referred to the Training and Membership Committee for consideration. If the application is approved, the school's membership will then be recommended to the AGBIS Board for ratification. Thereafter, schools will normally be expected to remain in membership unless there is notification of a significant change in circumstances, in which case AGBIS will review membership. Member schools should report to AGBIS any such change that might affect their membership. There are two categories of membership for schools: **full membership** and **associate membership**. The criteria for each are set out below. Schools in England and Wales applying for either category of membership will have heads in full membership of one of the five independent schools Heads' Associations or expecting to be so within one year. If this membership is not granted within that period, the school's membership of AGBIS will be terminated. Once a school is a member of AGBIS membership of a Heads' Association remains a strong recommendation but, should a Head leave or change associations, this will not necessarily disqualify the school from remaining a member of AGBIS.

CRITERIA FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP

2. To be accepted as full members, schools will need to demonstrate that the composition of the Governing Body and governance procedures meet the principles of good governance practice set out in the AGBIS publication 'Guidelines for Governors'. Specifically, the Governing Body will need to:

- a. Consist of sufficient governors for there still to be a quorum when some members face a conflict of interest. For example, the number of governors who are current parents must not be so great that a vote cannot take place if they face a conflict over a matter such as setting school fees.
- b. Demonstrate that members of the Governing Body are able to contribute a suitable range of expertise and experience.
- c. In accordance with Charity Commission Guidance, if the School is a Charity:
 - i. Not include any employees of the school (it is usual for the Head, Bursar and Clerk to be 'in attendance' at governing body meetings and other employees may be invited to attend as required);
 - ii. Not include individuals who are elected by other groups or bodies.

- iii. Not include any individuals disqualified from being governors, trustees or directors of a school of the relevant status.
3. If the school is not a charitable trust it must have either a governing body or an advisory or management committee which fulfils a similar function and is constituted in such a fashion as to provide a significant degree of oversight.
4. All schools must be able to demonstrate that they are viable by presenting their latest appropriately audited accounts and any other information as appropriate.
5. Schools must also be able to provide a satisfactory current inspection report issued by a recognised inspectorate. This will usually be:
 - a. ISI, SIS, Ofsted, Education Scotland or Estyn for schools in England, Scotland or Wales which are already a member of an ISC association;
 - b. A recognised or DfE-approved inspectorate for British curriculum schools overseas;
 - c. An independent inspectorate of overseas schools for schools outside the UK.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

7. Schools which do not meet all of the criteria above for full membership may be offered associate membership at the discretion of the AGBIS Board. The offer of associate membership can be temporary and may require a school to rectify a perceived shortcoming or weakness. Once this condition has been met the school may apply to be considered for full membership.
8. Associate Member schools pay the same membership fee as full members and are entitled to all the benefits of membership of AGBIS except the right to vote on any resolution considered at the AGM. Associate Members do not by virtue of their associate membership of AGBIS alone enjoy the benefits provided by the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Associate members are not allowed to use the AGBIS logo on any of their literature and may not cite AGBIS membership in correspondence.

**Endorsed by the AGBIS Board
10th October 2016**