

Academy Conversion Consultation - general

The Academies Act 2010 requires a school to consult '*such persons as they think appropriate*' on whether the school should be converted into an academy. The statutory requirement does not prescribe who should be consulted or the length of the consultation required.

What the law says

Under the *Academies Act 2010*, governors must consult "*such persons as they think appropriate*" at some stage before the funding agreement is signed.

Academies Act 2010

Section 5 Consultation on Conversion

- (1) *Before a maintained school in England is converted into an academy, the school's governing body must consult such persons as they think appropriate.*
- (2) *The consultation must be on the question of whether the school should be converted into an academy.*
- (3) *The consultation may take place before or after an academy order, or an application for an academy order, has been made in respect of the school."*

What the Government says

The question for the consultation should be: "**Should the school become an academy?**" It is up to the governing body of the school to determine who should be consulted. In its guidance, the Government merely states that "*schools should consider involving local bodies or groups who have strong links with the school.*"

There is no specified length of time for the consultation but the Government states that it is important that interested groups, individuals or organisations have a fair chance to respond and ask questions.

The Government suggests that it would be adequate for schools to consult by posting information on the school's website or by sending a letter home to parents.

Statutory consultation

Governing Bodies must consult formally about their school's plans to convert to an academy with anyone who they think will have an interest in the school changing its status. This will include staff members and parents. The law doesn't specify how long the consultation should last, but it is important that schools can demonstrate that interested groups, individuals and organisations have had a reasonable opportunity to respond. The formal consultation process must be completed before academy funding agreement is signed.