

Outstanding Governance Awards 2025



Outstanding clerk to a governing board: information sheet

About the award

This award is to recognise a governance professional undertaking the duties of a clerk (as outlined in the duties and responsibilities of the [clerking level of the NGA career pathway](#)) who has shown outstanding practice and contributed significantly to improving governance.

Who can be nominated in this category?

Any person working in the capacity of a clerk to a governing/trust board in a state-funded school/trust/federation in England, including in a maintained school, academy trust board or local governing board within a multi academy trust. They may be employed by the school or trust, self-employed or employed by a service provider. Those providing clerking services for multiple schools should select one school for the purposes of the nomination.

Who can make the nomination?

Clerks can self-nominate in this category.

Other individuals or organisations may nominate a clerk provided they have detailed knowledge of their work, achievements and impact to complete the form. These include:

- Chair/co-chair/vice-chair or another governor/trustee with the support of the chair
- Headteacher/CEO
- Lead governance professional
- Line manager (if working for a service provider or Local Authority)

Nomination process

To nominate a clerk for this award you will need to complete the nomination form below and return this document via email. You will also be asked to answer four questions about the work of the individual you are nominating.

If longlisted, you will also be asked to provide the following supporting information:

- An example agenda for a meeting of the full/local governing/trust board clerked by the nominee
- Example minutes for that same clerked by the nominee
- A maximum of two additional pieces of paperwork which have been developed or adapted by the nominee, in support of your nomination

How to apply

Complete the [nomination form](#) and return this document via email to awards@nga.org.uk by 12pm Monday 14th April 2025

What are the criteria?

Demonstrable evidence of:

- The six key features of clerking:
 - The role of the clerk
 - Knowledge, skills and effective behaviours
 - Understanding governance
 - Administration
 - Advice and guidance
 - People and relationships
- The clerk's work specifically improving governance and overcoming challenges

Nominations must also provide wider evidence of the following:

- A thorough understanding of the remit of the governing/trust board or local governing board as set out in relevant legislation or the scheme of delegation
- Being an efficient administrator who can plan meetings, draft agendas, provide concise accurate minutes and keep up-to-date records about the membership of the board
- Confidence in their knowledge of the law in relation to governance and uses it to support and advise the governing board where necessary
- Knowledge of what is considered good practice for effective governance and uses this to support and advise the governing board as appropriate
- Development of professional relationships with the governing board, especially in relation to the key roles of chair and headteacher/CEO
- Knowledge and confidence to challenge the board in relation to its legal responsibilities and intervene where appropriate
- Can support and challenge the chair to ensure the board focuses on strategic rather than operational decisions
- Can remain impartial and maintain confidentiality
- Support of recruitment to vacancies on the board and promotion of governance roles
- A working knowledge of current education policy and practice
- Positively influencing and/or facilitating robust self-evaluation by governing boards
- A positive attitude to personal development and training and is able to reflect on their own performance and select and undertake appropriate professional development

Not all these criteria must be demonstrated in the questions answered on the nomination form, but questions should be answered with relation to as many as possible and the remaining evidenced in supporting information requested at a later stage.

Helpful hints for a successful nomination

- A clear explanation including examples of where the clerk has met the criteria above.
- A concise explanation of where the clerk has gone above and beyond in their role.
- A clear understanding of where the clerk's work has specifically improved governance and overcome challenges.
- Demonstrable evidence of where the clerk has embodied the six key features of clerking as listed above (see the first bullet point)
- A clear story of improvement – the judges are not looking for perfection, but a commitment to growth.