

EQUITAS ACADEMIES TRUST



Attendance at MAT Trust Board Meetings and Committees Virtual Meetings Policy

Review Date: September 2026
To be Reviewed: September 2027
Agreed: Trust Board
Policy Lead: CEO

**ATTENDANCE AT TRUST BOARD MEETINGS AND COMMITTEES VIRTUAL
MEETINGS POLICY**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Equitas Academies Trust is committed to supporting those within the trust to conduct successful virtual meetings where the circumstances call for this, e.g. in the event that face-to-face meetings are not possible. This policy addresses the procedures which must be followed when conducting virtual meetings.

The board of trustees will conduct all virtual meetings in line with the academy's articles of association.

2. VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE AT FACE TO FACE MEETINGS

- 2.1 Where a Trustee wishes to attend a meeting of the Board or Committee by either telephone or video link the chair and/or clerk must be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible. They will be asked their reasons for not attending the meeting in person and their attendance virtually will be subject to the approval of the Trust Board or Committee Chair at the beginning of the meeting, though this approval will not be withheld without good reason. Where approval is withheld the reason for this will be minuted and the Trustee informed immediately.
- 2.2 Trustees attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (e.g. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the Trustee sharing their vote verbally with the clerk). Where this is not possible the Trustee will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.
- 2.3 Trustees attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.
- 2.4 The meeting will be chaired by a Trustee who is present in person.
- 2.5 If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a Trustee or Governor to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

3. VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- 3.1 It is envisaged that meetings will be face to face, however additional and extraordinary meetings can take place via telephone or video conference call as long as the usual quorum of Trustees is 'present' on the call.
- 3.2 Where a meeting is taking place virtually every effort will be made to enable all Trustees to access the meeting.
- 3.3 Where a meeting is taking place virtually the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the chair has exercised his/her right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.
- 3.4 Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the clerk being present virtually or by a Trustee who is present, other than the CEO, taking the minutes, and these will be presented to the next Trust Board meeting.

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- 3.5 Virtual meetings should not be recorded by any Trustee or the clerk without the approval of the Trust Board or Committee and for a specified purpose.

4. REVIEW OF POLICY

- 4.1 The policy will be reviewed annually, but any Trustee with any concerns about its operation can request that it is reviewed at any time.