

Our core team of lawyers deliver the legal aspects of an academy conversion process but we can also provide you with free access to project planning tools as part of our academy conversion package.

We also have a skilled, experienced project team available to support you with the things you need to do as a school during the conversion process. This support can be on-site or from behind the scenes. This is an optional service which complements the legal support you will receive from Browne Jacobson - and the service available includes the overall co-ordination of academy conversion projects as well as on-site project support, where it is required.

1. Planning tools - a free service for our academy conversion clients

Our experience of managing over 300 academy conversions has allowed us to identify the key activities required to successfully complete a conversion, and we have collated these tasks into a carefully constructed academy conversion project plan. We provide each school with a bespoke project plan, which is tailored to the school's (group, multi-academy or umbrella trust) specific circumstances to ensure all of the DfE's key deadlines are met.

Our planning tool also means that you have an understanding right from the outset of when we will be asking you to provide instructions, meaning that you can plan your resources and arrange meetings well in advance to ensure a planned approach. Your school's progress through the conversion process can also be tracked via our free online access service.

And although we follow robust processes, our approach is not mechanistic or inflexible; we tailor our support to suit the needs of each project, offering face-to-face support for key staff and/or working closely with governing bodies, if and when this support is required.

2. Project Support - an optional, inexpensive service designed to provide you with essential on-site support should you not have this resource at your disposal

The key to our project support service is that it is tailored to your needs. We know from our experience that schools have differing levels of staffing, expertise and day to day demands. Our service helps you to concentrate on your core purpose of teaching and learning by adding a valuable resource to your school team. Our project support co-ordinators will liaise with the legal team on your behalf and guide you through the school element of the conversion.

For those schools who need more support with the “doing” we can offer on-site support for you as detailed below. The choice is yours and our pricing will be transparent based on the level you choose.

As part of our core package our project support co-ordinators would:

- produce a tailored project plan and school plan detailing all steps and actions in the conversion process
- support in setting up your steering group
- attend steering group meeting and produce a schedule of meetings, as well as agendas and minutes
- attend one on-site meeting per month with the SBM or Office Manager (same day as Steering Group) to support with progress against the school plan
- offer ad hoc support to Head and SBM via email and telephone on the conversion process
- act as a conduit/escalation point for the Head/SBM into our legal team

We would suggest that a conversion may typically require 8 days of on-site project support - at £600 per day this equates to £4,800. However, the need for this service may increase for multi-academy structures and it can also be tailored to suit the specific needs of each school (which may mean you only require support for a handful of days).

Outside of our core package we can also provide further support where a school may need additional resource to do some of the school-oriented tasks relating to academy conversion. Areas we could support here include:

- production of school inventory
- tendering for finance system, Auditor, Accountant and Responsible Officer
- liaison with LA for TUPE due diligence information
- drafting Trade Union Recognition Agreement
- planning and attending consultation events
- drafting Q&A document based on questions from staff and wider stakeholder consultation
- tendering and proposing insurance arrangements for the academy

Depending on the school's needs we will provide a fixed fee whenever possible for support in these areas based on our competitive daily rate of £600.

talk to us...

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