

Helen Cairns

Legal Director

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Helen is a legal director in our academies team. Helen has been an advisor to education clients for over 20 years and is passionate about the sector. Throughout her career she has advised academies, further and higher education institutions and charities on a variety of issues from academy projects to commercial contracting, collaboration, governance and regulatory matters.

As a member of the academies team, Helen has experience across the whole remit of academy projects. This includes establishing multi academy trusts and advising sponsors; advising on academy conversions, transfers and mergers; advising on the academy conversions of sixth form colleges and on the establishment of 16 to 19 maths schools. Helen also supports the academy sector on governance and compliance issues as well as collaboration and contracting matters and the establishment of subsidiary companies. She enjoys providing training to boards of trustees on governance, trustee and director duties and company secretarial issues.

Helen is also an expert in college governance and regularly advises clients in this area in addition to advising them on general contracting and collaboration matters, including apprenticeships and Institutes of Technology. Helen has seen life on both sides of the fence as she has spent some time on secondment to a university, providing support to their in-house legal team.

Expertise

Services

Academy conversions

Academy sponsorships and MATs

Constitutional and governance
advice in higher education

Education law

Governance of schools and
colleges