

Leadership, Governance & Organisational Success

Introducing

SFA SIXTH FORM ASSOCIATES

Sixth Form Associates is the specialist post-16 division of FE Associates, the UK's leading education search, recruitment and consultancy organisation. Sixth Form Associates provides expert support to sixth form colleges, academies and schools with post-16 provision through senior leadership recruitment, governance and Board appointments, interim leadership and governance reviews.

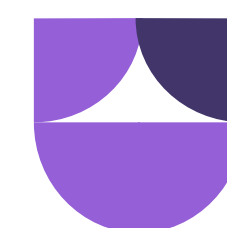
Our strength lies in our deep understanding of the sector. Our team are true sector experts with direct institutional leadership and governance experience.

Having led organisations through periods of growth, change and improvement, we understand the realities of educational leadership and governance and the challenges facing providers in a rapidly evolving environment.

This experience enables us to provide practical, high-quality and cost-effective solutions that help organisations secure outstanding leadership, strengthen governance and achieve sustainable success.

Working as trusted advisers, we take time to understand each organisation's culture, priorities and ambitions before designing tailored solutions that deliver lasting impact. Whether recruiting a senior leader or governor, providing interim management support or conducting an independent governance review, our focus remains the same: helping our clients achieve the very best outcomes for learners, staff and communities.

Our values



Integrity

We deliver on our promises and we don't promise what we can't deliver.



Diversity & Talent

We aim to attract and support the best diverse team of people.



Client Focus

We have a relentless client focus and the needs of our clients come first.



Excellence

Whatever we do, we aim to do it best.

Our Services



Executive Search & Recruitment

The appointment of a senior leader is one of the most important decisions any board or leadership team will make. We support colleges in identifying, attracting and appointing exceptional leaders across a wide range of executive and senior management roles, including CEO/Principals, Vice Principals, Associate/Assistant Principals and Directors of Professional Services.

Through our extensive sector networks, targeted search activity and rigorous assessment processes, we help organisations secure leaders who combine the skills, experience and values needed to deliver long-term success.

Our reputation has been built on delivering successful appointments that strengthen organisations and support educational excellence. We recognise that leadership appointments are an investment in the future and we approach every assignment with professionalism, integrity and an unwavering commitment to quality. By helping colleges secure exceptional leaders, we support organisations to thrive, innovate and continue delivering outstanding outcomes for learners, staff and communities.



Governance & Board Appointments

We specialise in high-quality, governance and board search that combines high levels of care with pricing that reflects real value.

Institutional governance is under unprecedented pressure and scrutiny and we are determined to support boards with expert search that attracts individuals who can bring their professional and personal perspectives that support effective governance. Our approach ensures that the candidates we attract not only bring technical expertise but also diverse viewpoints and an understanding of governance that delivers support, challenge and accountability.

Our open, transparent and personalised approaches ensure that boards can access candidates with a broad range of perspectives who bring experiences that add real value to institutional governance and strategy oversight. By building trusting relationships with our candidate base we are able to prioritise candidates who are going to be active participants in institutional governance.

Whether you are appointing a new Chair of Governors, committee chairs or board members, we offer a straightforward, effective search process to deliver diverse, capable and values-aligned individuals.



Interim Leadership Solutions

Leadership transitions, organisational change and unexpected vacancies can create significant challenges. Our interim leadership service provides experienced sector professionals who can bring immediate capacity, expertise and stability.

Sixth Form Associates provides high-quality interim leadership and management support that enables organisations to maintain stability, sustain performance and continue delivering their strategic priorities.

We provide interim leadership and management support across all areas of college operations. Our interim professionals are experienced sector leaders who bring credibility, expertise and practical solutions to the organisations they support.

We offer flexible interim solutions for both short-term and longer-term assignments across middle and senior management positions. Our support helps organisations address immediate challenges while ensuring day-to-day operations continue effectively.

What makes our service unique is the combination of a well-established employed consultant base and a wide network of experienced associate consultants. This breadth of expertise enables us to respond rapidly to client requirements and identify individuals with the right skills, experience and leadership qualities for each assignment. In many cases, we can provide suitable candidates within exceptionally short timescales, ensuring timely support when it is needed most.



Governance Reviews

Strong governance is fundamental to the success of every institution. Effective boards provide strategic leadership, oversight and accountability, ensuring organisations remain focused on delivering outstanding outcomes for learners while meeting their regulatory and statutory responsibilities. At Sixth Form Associates, we provide independent governance reviews that help boards evaluate their effectiveness, identify opportunities for development and strengthen their contribution to organisational success.

Our reviews are designed to be more than a compliance exercise. While aligned to Department for Education expectations and sector best practice, they are primarily developmental, providing boards with meaningful insight, objective challenge and practical recommendations that support continuous improvement.

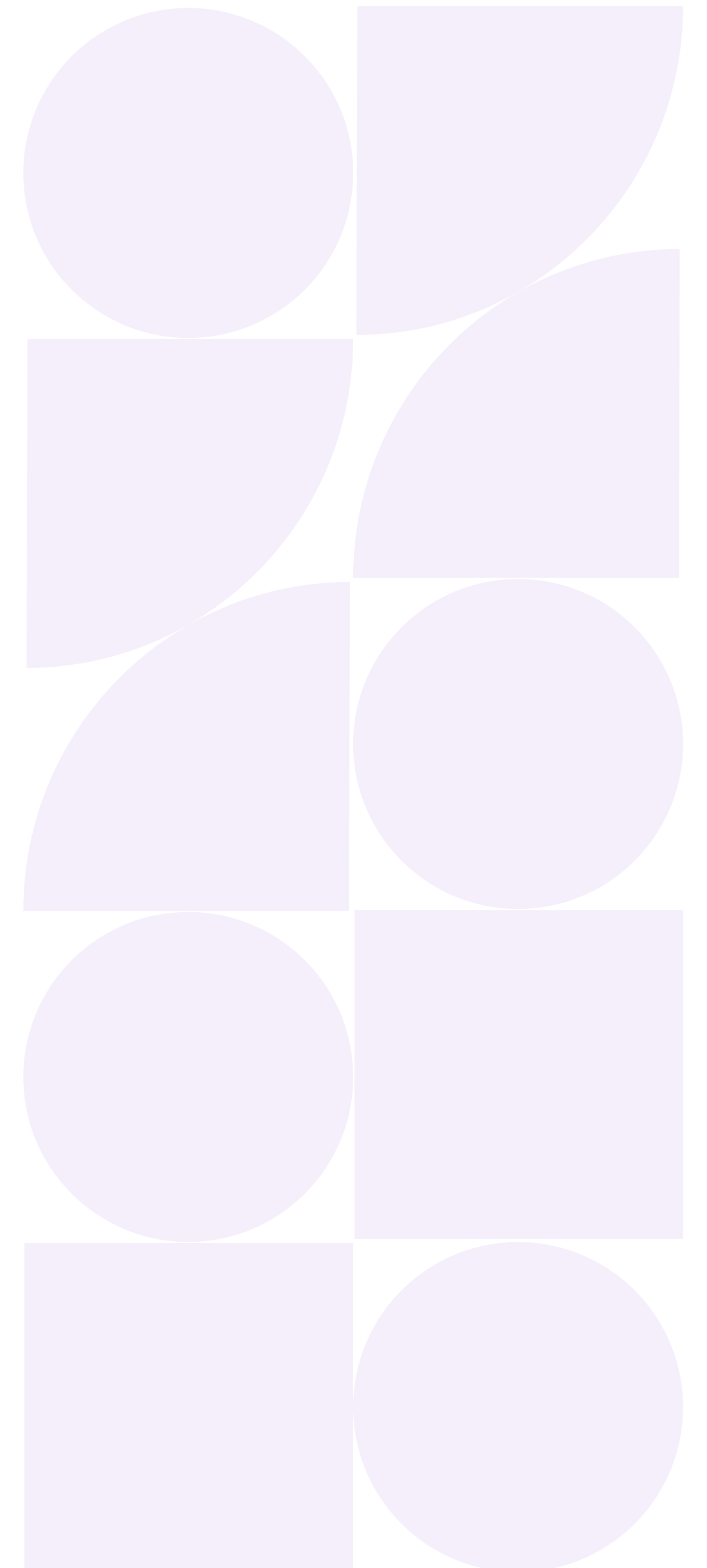
Every review begins with a thorough understanding of the institution's context, strategic priorities, governance arrangements and operating environment. Recognising that every organisation is different, we tailor our approach to reflect the specific circumstances, challenges and ambitions of each board.

Our methodology draws on a range of evidence-gathering techniques, including document reviews, governance questionnaires, board observations and interviews with governors, senior leaders and governance professionals. This enables us to build a balanced, evidence-based assessment of board effectiveness from multiple perspectives.

A key strength of our service is the expertise of our reviewers. All having served in senior positions on Governing Bodies and also having led colleges. This combination of governance and leadership experience ensures our reviews are both credible and practical, providing valuable insights for boards and executive teams alike.

Our framework focuses on four core areas: Culture and Behaviours, Structures and Assurance, Strategy and Impact and Board Development. Together, these provide a comprehensive assessment of governance effectiveness, helping boards strengthen decision-making, accountability and strategic delivery.

Importantly, our work does not end with evaluation. We collaborate with boards to develop practical, prioritised action plans that translate findings into meaningful improvement. Through sector expertise, independent insight and a commitment to continuous improvement, our governance reviews provide the confidence, clarity and direction needed to maximise board effectiveness and organisational success.



Get in touch



Whether you are looking to appoint an exceptional senior leader, require experienced interim support, commission a Governance Review or simply find out more about our services, Sixth Form Associates has the expertise, insight and sector knowledge to help you succeed.

We understand the opportunities and challenges facing the post-16 sector and are committed to delivering practical, high-quality and cost-effective solutions tailored to the needs of your organisation.

To discuss your requirements and explore how we can support your strategic priorities, please get in touch.



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