

# Induction process for school council members

The induction of a newly appointed school council member is a significant and important step in ensuring and enabling school council members to be fully engaged participants in council deliberations from the time they arrive. Induction is essentially about a process of socialisation into an organisation. It is about being empowered with knowledge so as to make an adequate and meaningful contribution from the first meeting of the council. Induction should therefore be a well-considered process. Further, it would be prudent for the council to discern an induction process for new members and subsequently record it within their council handbook/charter as an ongoing reference point.

An effective and purposeful induction process would include a range of tasks and activities to be undertaken over a period of time both prior to, and after, commencing as a member of the school council.

Suggested activities prior to commencing as a school council member:

- Meet the council chair
- Undertake a tour of the school
- Meet the school leadership team
- Meet with your council mentor
- Read the key documents related to the work of the council:
  - school mission and values statements
  - vision statement
  - strategic directions statement and strategic (action) plan
  - council constitution and handbook
  - most recent annual school report
  - minutes of last three council meetings
  - most recent audited accounts
  - staff organisational chart
  - list of council members, their bios, and their contact details

Suggested activities after commencing as a school council member:

- New council member and mentor to debrief after first, third, and sixth meeting (an opportunity to make sense of the council agenda, papers and culture)
- Towards the end of the new member's first year, chair and council to seek feedback from the new council member about the experience of the induction process

An effective school council induction process requires rigorous and considered planning and preparation. It is therefore important that the council allocates sufficient time and resources to ensure it happens. In essence, a thorough, well-considered induction process is an investment to ensure the quality of school governing is evident and that the school council performs effectively.