

Updated version (November 2023)

**Applying for a Determination: Academies and Free Schools**

**Collective worship in academies and free schools**

An Academy’s Funding Agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for acts of collective worship in maintained schools. Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves. This applies to Academies with and without a religious designation.

An Academy without a religious designation must provide collective worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian.

An Academy with a religious designation must provide collective worship in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Academy’s designated faith. It can also choose to reflect the other principal religions and those found in the local community.

Academies should follow paragraphs 50 to 88 of the DfE’s [Guidance on collective worship in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collective-worship-in-schools).

Religious Education Council provides useful information. Please visit [Collective Worship in Academies and Free Schools – Q & A.](https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resource/religious-education-collective-worship-academies-free-schools-q/)

**Applying for exemption from providing broadly Christian collective worship**

A maintained school can apply to the local SACRE for an exemption not to provide broadly Christian collective worship for some or all of its pupils, having considered the family background of pupils attending the school. An equivalent provision applies to Academies but the Academy Trust would apply, through the ESFA, to the Secretary of State for the determination.

Such a determination does not mean that the Academy or school would be exempted from providing any collective worship. They would still be required to provide daily collective worship, but of a different character that is more appropriate given the family backgrounds of the pupils in the school. The Secretary of State may approach the local SACRE for its view when considering such an application.

**Convertor academies**

All schools applying to convert to academy status should be asked as part of the application process if they already have a valid determination already in place. If they do, the academy Project Lead is responsible for sending them an application form, for assessing the application and submitting a recommendation to the RSC for approval/rejection.  The process allows for them to approach the ESFA, the DfE faith schools team or DfE Curriculum policy team if they require advice. SACRE will provide information to academy convertors about the renewal date for their current determination.

**Application form**

The determination application form below should be used for new applications and for renewals. The completed form and supporting evidence should be submitted to the DfE using the [ESFA enquiry form](https://form.education.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-f9f4f5a1-936f-448b-bbeb-9dcdd595f468/AF-Stage-8aa41278-3cdd-45a3-ad87-80cbffb8b992/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen)

**APPLICATION FORM FOR A DETERMINATION IN RESPECT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN AN ACADEMY OR FREE SCHOOL**

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| Name of School |   |
| Pupils to whom application applies (please select %)): some of the pupils all of the pupils  |
| Reasons for application (please include breakdown of faith background in your application in percentages) of children from families, they believe the determination will apply to for e.g. Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, Muslim, etc.  |
| How many pupils are currently withdrawn from collective worship?  |
| Details of consultation with governors * + Evidence of consultation with the governing body e.g. Include a section from the governing body minutes where approval was granted.
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| * Details of consultation with staff (including evidence):
* Details of consultation with parents (including evidence): e.g. correspondence sent to parents and results of the responses
* Details of consultation with pupils:
* Schools should consider adding the consultation document on their website(s) in order to get maximum coverage for the consultation thus allowing the main groups above additional opportunity to provide feedback*.*
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| Proposed arrangements for future collective worship:How the school seek to promote community cohesion, for example if they will hold simultaneous assemblies for different religious groups. |
| Names and signatures of head teacher and director who can sign on behalf of the academy trust |  |