ACADEMICIS
Executive Search Firm

School / Trust Senior Leadership Recruitment

HELPING SCHOOLS / TRUSTS APPOINT THE BEST SENIOR LEADERS



Your Key Consultants



Richard Lucas
Chief Executive Officer and Founder

Richard Lucas is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Academicis and keeps a watching brief over all assignments.

Having spent the formative 20 years of his career in multinational technology and investment banking institutions, Richard started his education recruitment career in 2008, joining the Times Educational Supplement (TES). Here he gained a thorough understanding of the education recruitment market and the issues facing schools today. He worked in a number of the company's divisions before joining TES Prime, the Executive Search arm before moving on to set up Academicis in 2013.

Since the company's inception, Richard has led Academicis to become one of the market leaders in school's senior leadership recruitment. Over his career to date he has placed Headteacher to CEO roles across in excess of 800 Schools, Trusts and Diocese and has clients as far South as Plymouth, and Portsmouth, as well as far North as Preston, York and Cumbria.

Outside of work, Richard is a very keen swimmer and enjoys spending time with his wife, 10 year old twins and ageing spaniel.

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Sir Michael Wilshaw
Associate Director

Known for an unwavering commitment to improving standards as a teacher, headteacher, Director of Education and as Ofsted's Chief Inspector, Sir Michael has helped to improve the lives of many generations of young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

As Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, Children's Services and Skills, between 2012 and 2016, Sir Michael was pleased at the end of his tenure, to report that nearly two million more children and young people were being educated in good and outstanding schools than when he took up his position in 2012. In 2000, he was knighted by the Queen for Services to Education.

Previous to his appointment as HMCI, Sir Michael had been a very successful head teacher of a number of schools in Inner London. He became particularly well known for Mossbourne Academy in Hackney, East London, where he transformed one of the worst schools in Britain into one of the best, sending large numbers of children to top universities including Oxford and Cambridge.

Sir Michael has held a number of senior advisory positions to the UK Government and also to education ministries abroad including those of Brazil, Nepal, New Zealand and Australia.

He has been a Trustee of the Prince of Wales' Teaching Institute and a member of the National Advisory Group for the Children's Plan and for London Challenge. He is presently Professor of Education at St Mary's University and Advisor to a number of school groups in the UK and abroad.



Caroline Olsen
Head of Search

Caroline has been working in education for over 20 years and within education recruitment for over 13 years, latterly at TES Prime the executive search arm of the TES publication. During this time, she has built strong relationships with schools and supported many senior leaders to obtain their dream jobs. As Head of Delivery at Academicis, she has successfully delivered and worked on many leadership roles for schools and trusts. Clients come to bank on her personally for her support during the attraction and selection phases as they know how determined she is to go above and beyond to make sure a seamless recruitment process is achieved.

As well as steering her team of resourcers to generate a sound field of candidates, she oversees the entire administration process from shortlisting and vetting, through assessment and interview days to appointment. She is passionate about education and making a difference to how children learn, loves a challenge and working with different types of schools to achieve a shared goal creates this.

In her free time, she energetically supports charity events with a local sports club to raise money for children.

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Introduction

Academicis is a national **Specialist Search Practice,** working exclusively with Schools, Trusts and Diocese on their permanent and Interim, Senior & Executive Leadership appointments.

We run recruitment assignments for **Assistant/ Deputy Headteacher** level, through to **Chief Executive Officer positions**, as well as Trust level CX roles in Business, HR, Finance and Operations.

We believe that advertising is simply no longer fit for purpose in the way it was, and will only ever be seen by around 15% of the candidates who are both suitable and potentially available. Exceptional candidates are rarely actively looking for a new role, but they can be uncovered through proactive **headhunting.**

Our **proactive search process** makes it possible to **generate and cultivate** interest in your leadership role.

We specialise exclusively within the **Education Senior Leadership sector**, so we understand your individual and nuanced requirements and, crucially, we know where to find candidates with the right experience in sympathy with your **vision, values and ethos.**

We nurture potential candidates through to application, which increases your likelihood of **appointing the right person, first time.**

Furthermore, we understand budgets are not unlimited in the education sector and so **provide a clear fixed-price service** which **guarantees** you an appointment at no extra cost and saves your staff time and resources.

Our Credentials

Over **80 years** of headhunting recruitment experience across the team

More than **1000 successful leadership appointments** made in the last 9 years

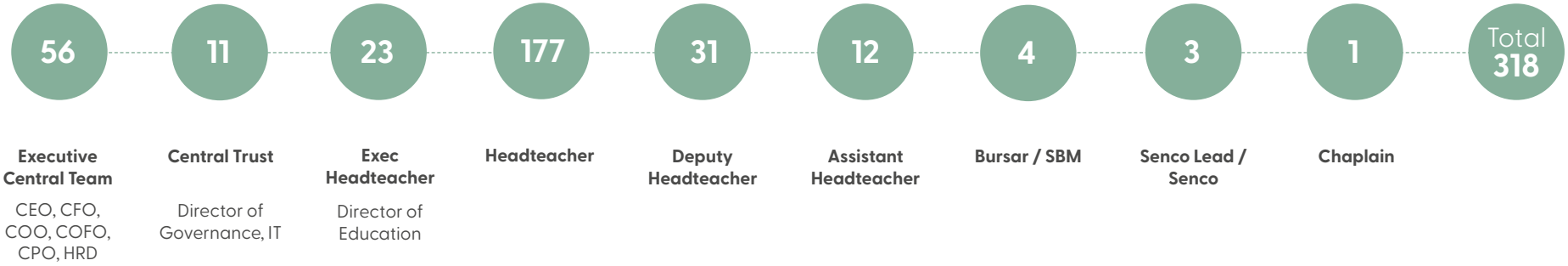
99.3% first-time appointment rate over the last 5 years

96% of successful candidates have been identified through **executive search/headhunting,** rather than advertisement response

85% of our successful appointments are within Schools/Trusts specialised for **faith, location and challenge,** illustrating our ability to identify and target leaders with niche experience

68.4% of our business comes from repeat business, through **recommendations and referrals** from satisfied clients

Successful Assignments completed Post Covid



The Academicis Journey

1. We appoint a **Dedicated Recruitment Director & Search Consultant** to manage your assignment
2. We develop and share a **Project Initiation Brief** with you
3. We carry out a **Tour of the School/Trust** to understand your Vision, Ethos & Culture
4. We arrange and facilitate a **Briefing Meeting** with your Board to understand the requirements of the role
5. We carry out a **Salary Benchmarking Exercise** to ensure you are offering a competitive salary
6. Our experienced designer will create a **Candidate Brochure** with details about the role and School/Trust
7. We develop and manage a **Digital Advertising Campaign**, on both Social Media and National advertising platforms (TES)
8. Our Search team commence the **Search & Headhunting Process**
9. We carry out rigorous **Quality Assurance & Data checks** of all candidates identified
10. We organise Candidate **School/Trust Conversations & Tours**
11. We arrange and facilitate an **Interview Planning & Preparation meeting** with your Board
12. Applicants submit applications to us
13. We develop a **Shortlisting Pack & Executive Summary Report** for the Board
14. We arrange, support and facilitate a **Shortlisting meeting** to agree a suitable shortlist of candidates for interview
15. We invite the successful Candidates to **Interview** and request professional references
16. We attend, support and facilitate the **Interviews process** from start to finish

What happens throughout the assignment

- Continuous Candidate Nurturing
- Continuous Client Contact including weekly Reporting on progress

Academicis' Approach to Recruitment

We offer a bespoke approach to each leadership recruitment assignment we work on. Our search strategy is tailored to the particular needs of your School/Trust and is developed in consultation with you.



1

DEDICATED RECRUITMENT DIRECTOR & SEARCH CONSULTANT

We will appoint a dedicated Recruitment Director, to steer and support your entire process, supported by our highly trained executive search team who will handle all the resourcing, vetting, reputational analysis and data checks before shortlisting and interview.

2

PROJECT INITIATION BRIEF

Following our initial engagement meeting with you, our Recruitment Director will develop and share a Project Initiation Brief, including all key dates and responsibilities for the assignment.

3

SCHOOL/TRUST TOUR

To get a better understanding of your organisation, our Recruitment Director will arrange a visit to your School/Trust, accompanied by one our Search Consultants. Here they will spend time understanding more about the setting, ethos, environment, community and culture.

4

THE BRIEFING MEETING

We will arrange a full briefing meeting with key stakeholders including Chair of the Board and any other stakeholders you deem relevant. This needs to take place very early in the process and requires around 2 hours. This can take place either during the School Tour or at an alternative date. We are happy to create a virtual environment to host this briefing if required.

The briefing meeting will cover:

- What it is like working within the School/Trust/Diocese
- What impact the role is designed to achieve – this will influence the stage of career and experience of potential applicants
- The current context of the role and sector identifying key "selling" points and any potential perceived barriers to attraction
- Specific and general tasks and responsibilities
- The key relationships linked to the role/School
- Core and desirable attitudes, characteristics, skills and experience
- The content of the Role and School/Trust Candidate Brochure
- Process – who will be involved at each stage, including the recruitment panel, and their contact details
- Exact dates for shortlisting and interviews and agree key deadlines
- Location arrangements for site visits, shortlisting panel and interview days, plus key contacts
- Identification of pictures, logos, any specific branding guidelines and any other inclusions for printed and electronic materials
- Names of any candidates that you would like the team not to approach
- Any desired names you would specifically like us to approach

We will also assist you to develop a job description and person specification for the role capturing the essence of the position, key outcomes, experience and skills and qualities of the kind of candidates who will be successful in such a role.

5

SALARY BENCHMARKING

With the appointment of a new Senior Leader, the subject of salary/remuneration can be a minefield.

Although potential Senior Leader candidates are not exclusively driven by financial remuneration, we need to ensure that you are offering a competitive, going-rate salary.

As with many historic clients, the Academicis team will undertake a thorough benchmarking exercise to ensure you are offering a suitable and competitive salary to attract the very best candidates. As part of this process, we will complete a body of research, which we will share with you, discuss, and advise accordingly.

6

ROLE & SCHOOL/TRUST CANDIDATE BROCHURE

To assist the campaign, we design an attractive brochure, whose sole purpose is to maximise the likelihood of a candidate who has expressed interest taking their application forward.

This includes welcome message and School/Trust information, including why to consider the role, job description and person specification, process details and throughout plenty of visual impact.

This is sent to both search and advertising responders, and in all cases followed up for feedback. This process brings you valuable feedback on how your role and venture is being perceived in the marketplace, which crucially allows you to change tack along the way if necessary and influence future recruitment campaigns.

7

ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

We would suggest that a degree of advertising is useful to promote the roles and serves the further purpose of encapsulating the role and requirements briefly to be able to promote on social media. It is important to note that not only is advertising included in our quoted fee but should there ever be a need for a rerun this is also at no extra cost. However, 96% of candidates we have placed have come via search only.

1. Adverts (TES and our Website)

Our recommended option would be to advertise in TES Online. We will design your advert with compelling content, to highlight the attractions of the role as a career option, including a striking pictorial header and footer for maximum impact. The advert will run for a month online and in parallel to our search campaign. We will also advertise the role on our Company website, on our dedicated page for Job vacancies.

2. Social Media Campaigns

As well as appearing on our own website, our dedicated Marketing team will develop a marketing campaign that will give your job exposure to our network of contacts and followers on our digital media platforms such as LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter.



8 SEARCH & HEADHUNTING STRATEGY

We will conduct an intelligent search process. Academicis has a national network, working with hundreds of Trusts, Schools and Diocese across the United Kingdom. Furthermore, we have extensive knowledge of who is where, gained from previous similar searches for CEOs, Directors of Education, Executive Principals, Headteachers and Deputies.

We are able to further draw on our network of "Trusted Advisors" – RSC, NLG, ISI, HMC, NLE, Ofsted, Diocesan Directors of Education etc. to recommend people of the right calibre, reputation and demonstrable track record. It is this quality assurance and analysis of candidate historic performance that drives the success of such an appointment.

As part of the fresh desk approach, we carry out location and/or skill-set specific candidate mapping and will develop a strategy for seeking out candidates that may be interested in the role. The search strategy and outcome are heavily dependent on our findings from the initial briefing discussions and fully informed by your vision, ethos and aspirational goals.

We identify Outstanding and Good Schools/Trusts in similar contexts within a reasonable catchment radius and dependant upon the scope and gravity of the Senior Leadership Team position, we may also consider a national search where candidates would consider relocation. We will also approach NLEs, NLGs and RSCs and key figures within the education community for recommendations.

Furthermore, if members of the board would like to suggest potential candidates to us, we would be delighted to approach sensitively, if of course appropriate.

9 CANDIDATE QUALITY ASSURANCE & VETTING

As standard we carry out quality assurance checks on every candidate on your behalf, including:

- Competency based interview qualification & analysis
- Ofsted reports and grade for the Trusts/Schools which they have led
- DfE performance statistics in recent years for Trusts/Schools they have led (context, key stage exam results, closing the gap statistics, progress 8 etc)
- Media analysis – for any positive or negative press
- Reputational analysis
- The application against job description and person specification
- The supporting statement
- References (once a candidate is shortlisted)

10

CANDIDATE PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

We arrange appointed telephone discussions, between the candidates and the School/Trust for them to learn about the role and organisation and to answer any questions. We also encourage and arrange a visit to the School/Trust. We will follow up with the candidate after the visit to discuss reasons to apply or queries still to be resolved.

Active Nurturing of Interest & The Candidate Experience
On contact with potential candidates, whatever their source, we take pains to discuss the role in depth and answer candidate questions. They receive rich and honest background information, enabling them to make informed decisions as to whether the role is for them, ensuring all applications that come through are serious and credible.

We also correct any misperceptions as we have found that there can be varying views and a lack of understanding about a particular school or organisation where there may have been controversy and/or press interest which sometimes means candidates would not naturally consider the role.

We are in regular contact with the candidates until the closing date. Inevitably, many candidates only prepare their application just before closing date, but we do encourage early application to give more certainty, as the campaign progresses, that you have a field. We also arrange visits or telephone calls with key stakeholders if this is possible or advisable.

We recognise that we are representing the School/Trust in all our dealings with potential candidates and our aim is to ensure they are left with a warm, positive and professional impression of your organisation.

11

INTERVIEW PLANNING & PREPARATION MEETING

We will work with your recruitment panel during the campaign to refine the format and content of the interview day so that it is all ready for the interview week. We create all administration and process documentation to include shortlisting packs, panel interview packs, scoring sheets, interview schedules, references, tailor- made exercises and carousel activities and these are all provided on the day.

Our whole approach is a bespoke one for each role and our advice on the interview process will flow from the discussions we have at the briefing stage. It is informed by your need to assess for specific challenges you know to be facing a postholder, or where previous candidates have fallen short. It will also reflect the needs and priorities of the various stakeholders who will be involved in the process, and, of course the time and location constraints at the assessment site.

12

APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY CANDIDATES

All candidates who have reached this stage are asked to complete an application form and supporting statement/ letter. They are regularly contacted to answer further queries, check how application is progressing and that it will be submitted by closure date.

13

SHORTLISTING PACK & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT (SIFT REPORT)

Having conducted the vetting, we summarise our findings in a Sift Report, which provides an executive summary of the applications, with statistics on each candidate. This is to save your panel time. Our report gives our judgement based on absolute and relative consideration of the application against the hundreds we receive for leadership posts. It is a guide only and can be used or discarded at the shortlisting process. However, at the very least you will have the key performance statistics against each candidate. The summary report is distributed to the shortlisting panel with a zipped file of applications prior to shortlisting. At this stage demographic and equality monitoring information is removed and applications can be submitted on a name-blind basis if preferred, so that you can be sure shortlisting is based on the application and criteria set alone.

14

THE SHORTLISTING MEETING

We will support and facilitate a shortlisting meeting. Our purpose is not to influence the decision but to be able to explain aspects of the applications as necessary, to gain feedback to be able to brief unsuccessful candidates and to ensure and minute that a fair process is followed, so that any decisions made are unchallengeable. Our role is that of objective "honest broker". We can attend a physical shortlisting meeting, but in our experience, shortlisting can often be more conveniently and effectively undertaken by a virtual meeting, so it better fits in with the panel's other commitments and does not artificially extend the timescale, especially as time is tight.

15

CANDIDATE INVITED TO INTERVIEW

Following shortlisting we will communicate with those you wish to invite for interview, liaising on times and dates and informing them regarding preparation and the programme of activities.

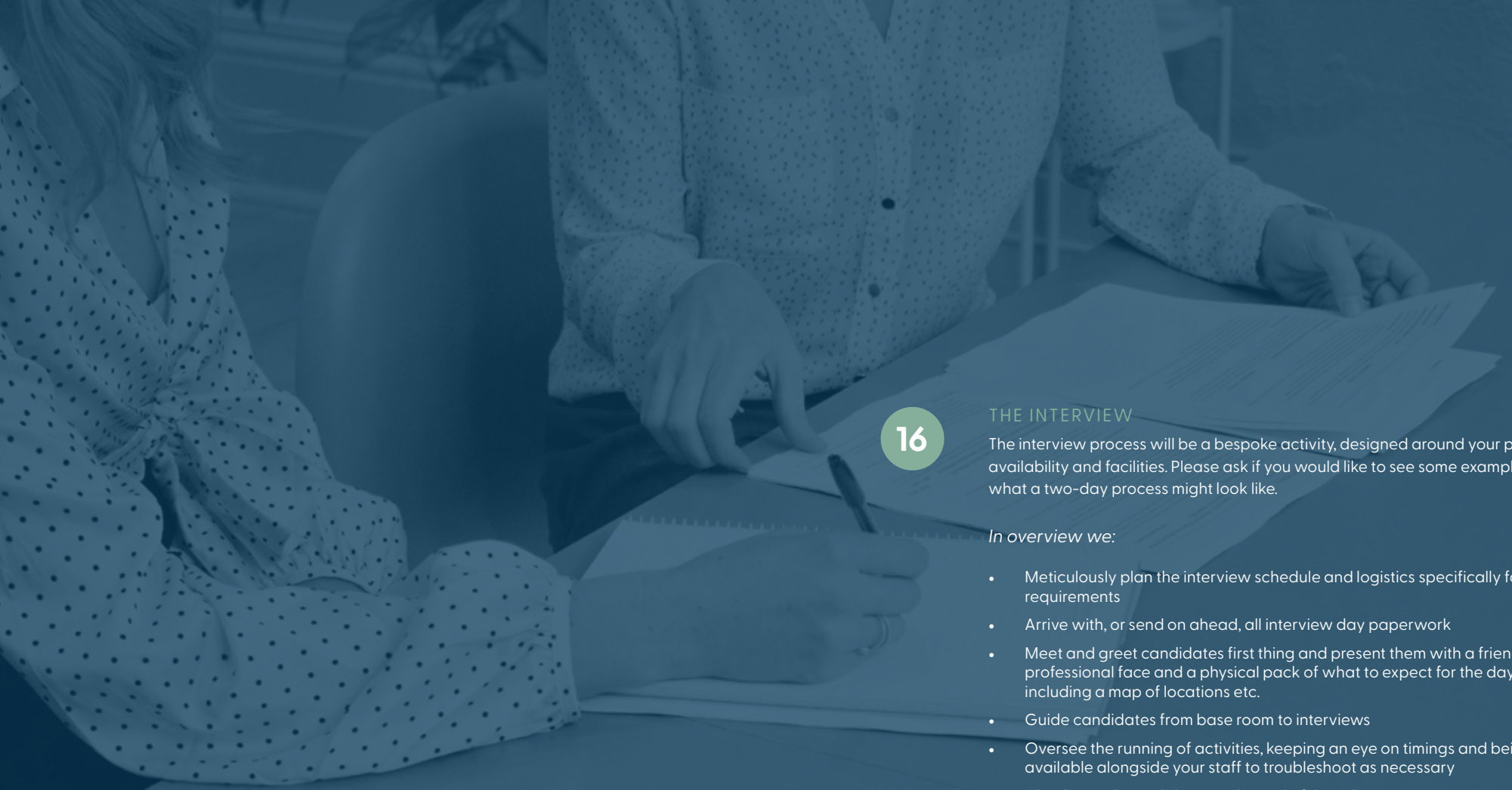
At this stage and prior to interview we take up professional references on your behalf for the shortlisted candidates. These will be from the last two chronological employers rather than as nominated by the candidate. We chase the references to ensure that you have sight of them before the assessment days.

All shortlisted candidates are asked to bring with them to interview their safer recruitment documentation – current DBS check, passport, academic and professional certificates, driving licence and two utility bills.

At this stage, we can arrange for psychometric testing of candidates although this would be at an extra cost of £350 per candidate. If you would like to see an example of a report please ask.

In terms of whether we would recommend it, in our opinion a well-constructed assessment and interview day together with the written application and personal statement or letter, with references and reputational analysis should provide all the information needed to decide whether a candidate is suitable. If you do wish to conduct behavioural testing, we would want to know what specific dimensions you are seeking to be tested in this way and would consult on whether there may be an assessment exercise that could bring this out.

We can provide samples of activities and questions that have been used at assessment days by other institutions. Please ask if you would like to see some examples. We will work with your recruitment panel during the campaign to refine the format and content of the day so that it is all ready for the interview week. The assessments should ideally be designed to add to the process revealing traits, skills and aptitudes that cannot feasibly be demonstrated in the written application or by reference. We always recommend that the assessment activities are to decide which shortlisted candidates are appointable to the role. The interview is to decide which appointable candidate most suits your venture.



16

THE INTERVIEW

The interview process will be a bespoke activity, designed around your priorities, availability and facilities. Please ask if you would like to see some examples of what a two-day process might look like.

In overview we:

- Meticulously plan the interview schedule and logistics specifically for your requirements
- Arrive with, or send on ahead, all interview day paperwork
- Meet and greet candidates first thing and present them with a friendly, professional face and a physical pack of what to expect for the day including a map of locations etc.
- Guide candidates from base room to interviews
- Oversee the running of activities, keeping an eye on timings and being available alongside your staff to troubleshoot as necessary
- Check in with candidates at the end of their day
- Are present for the deliberations at the end of the first day to facilitate the process and gain the information for candidate feedback if unsuccessful
- Contact overnight all candidates moving on to day 2 giving details of timings and requirements for day 2
- Attend the interviews to facilitate the process and deliberations, as an 'honest broker' for the decision-making stage
- Communicate the result to the unsuccessful candidates with full developmental feedback

Please let us know if you would like to see examples of any of the documents mentioned in this brochure, such our Briefing document, Proposed Project Initiation Brief, Candidate Brochures, psychometric testing models or assessment day formats, activities and questions.

Some of the Schools and Trusts we've worked with

SCHOOLS

- Alcester Grammar School
- Audenshaw School
- Avenue House School
- Barnhill School
- Belmore Primary School
- Cardinal Newman Catholic School
- Dorchester St Birinus Primary School
- Featherstone High School
- Grinling Gibbons & Lucas Vale Primary Federation
- Hazledene Primary School
- JFS School
- Newport Community School Primary Academy
- Oak Farm Infant School
- Preston Manor School
- Ratcliffe College
- Ravenswood Primary School
- Rodborough School
- Sir William Ramsay School
- St Pancras Catholic Primary School
- The King's (The Cathedral) School
- Villiers High School
- Watergate School
- Windlesham School
- Woodlands Primary Academy

TRUSTS

- Active Learning Trust
- Alumnis Multi-Academy Trust
- Bedford College Academies Trust
- Bohunt Education Trust
- Bridge Academy Trust
- Central Regional Schools Trust
- Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust
- Djanogly Learning Trust
- Hope Sentamu Learning Trust
- Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust
- MacIntyre Academies
- National Autistic Society
- Northern Leaders Trust
- Obsorne Co-operative Academy Trust
- Peterborough Keys Academies Trust
- The Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust
- The Good Shepherd Trust
- The Vine Schools Trust
- University of Lincoln Academy Trust
- Voyage Education Partnership
- Waveney Valley Academies Trust
- Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust
- Westcountry Schools Trust
- Witherslack Group
- Weydon Multi Academy Trust
- Quantock Education Trust

Testimonials & References

We would be delighted to arrange a conversation with a previous client to attest the quality of our service. These can be booked by appointment only. If you would kindly contact us with suitable dates and times, we will organise the conversations with our historic clients.

For a selection of our Testimonials, please see our website, where you will find pages of written testimonials, as well a number of more in-depth references in video format, from clients explaining our expertise in successfully conducting the whole end to end executive search process.

John Winter, Chief Executive Officer,
Weydon Multi Academy Trust

We recently decided to use Academicis for our appointments for two Principals and a Deputy Principal. It was a very good decision.
Not only were we able to fill the roles with outstanding candidates but we had a large very highly capable field to choose from. They organised everything from application, adverts etc to the interview day itself.
They are highly professional and tailored the appointment process to our needs. It took the whole process off my 'worry list'.
I highly recommend their services as a better more appropriate way of recruiting in this post Covid era.

Rob Brown, Chair of the Board of Trustees,
Quantock Education Trust

Having run our own campaign for a new CEO which resulted in us being unable to appoint, we asked Academicis to support us with the repeat campaign. Their involvement in everything from creating an excellent offer document, through to managing the logistics of the interview days, took away a lot of the administrative activities and helped with a very smooth process. However, the real value that they added was in the size and quality of the candidates that applied. Through their extensive networks and proactive candidate management, we ended with a very strong field to choose from and are delighted with the appointment that we made.

Our Fees

All services are “Run to Fill and Fixed Fee”.

There are no hidden costs, no further costs, (unless you choose to do psychometric testing), and there is a guaranteed appointment at the end so no risk to you. In other words, we will continue to work with you at no extra cost until you appoint, but with a **99.3%** first-time success rate, we are confident that this will not be necessary.

These costs reflect:

- Dedicated time of recruitment director, resource and administrator plus a portion of support team time
- Travel expenses to sites
- Communication costs throughout
- Advice, design and development of full-colour promotional materials for the roles
- Social media management
- Expertise to develop the search strategies
- Expertise, time and materials for shortlisting, assessment and interview days
- Availability 24/7 throughout the process
- A guaranteed appointment with fully contained costs



Leadership Development & Support Programme, with Sir Michael Wilshaw

This year Academicis are going one step further to support Schools and Trusts by offering a new CPD, Mentoring and Coaching service. The Academicis Leadership Development & Support Programme will be led by our newest team member, Sir Michael Wilshaw, former Chief Inspector of OFSTED.

For further information please call us on **01223 907979.**



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