The growing number of academies and multi-academy trusts is changing the shape of the education landscape. This, in turn, is having a knock-on effect on the way the NUT operates as a union. Building a strong collective presence in each and every academy is becoming progressively more important in a context where strong school or college union groups will be necessary to ensure terms and conditions are protected.

The NUT has for some time put a focus on ensuring that there is a representative in every workplace and on building strong union groups. Central to this has been the idea that union activities should involve as many members as possible in making their collective voices heard within the workplace. The Union has achieved considerable success in this initiative and whether your school or college becomes a stand-alone academy, a sponsored academy or joins a multi-academy trust, we want to help you at work.

This toolkit seeks to provide practical guidance, tools and arguments to NUT representatives and activists who are taking steps to promote members’ interests and strengthen the Union in the course of a transfer to a new employer.

To help build a collective voice in your school or college, try to …

- involve members at all stages of the transfer to a new employer
- encourage other members to take an active role in the Union
- identify teachers who are not in a union and ask them to join the NUT
- talk to representatives of the other unions in your school or college
- stay in touch with other representatives if your school or college is part of a federation or group of school or colleges converting
- contact representatives in other institutions if your school or college is to be sponsored by another school, college, group of schools or multi-academy trust
- ask management to clarify any issue you or your members are uncertain about during the transfer; it is important for members’ rights that any ambiguities are cleared up
- be robust in defending your members’ interests, and always put your representations in writing
- have the NUT aims and objectives contained in this document clear in your mind so you know what you want during and after the change of employer
- keep in touch with your division secretary and other NUT colleagues throughout the process