



TERMS OF REFERENCE

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Establishment and Responsibility

The Board of Trustees has resolved to establish a Finance and Operations Committee which will cover Finance, Personnel and Premises. It is responsible to the Board.

The chair and Trustees of the Finance and Operations Committee shall be non-executive Trustees and shall be appointed by the Board. The chair shall be a non-executive member of the Board.

Trustees who are not Trustees of the Finance and Operations Committee should have the right of attendance. The Governance Professional will circulate minutes of meetings of the Finance and Operations Committee to all Trustees of the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in his role as Accounting Officer, the Director of Operations and the Director of Finance will normally attend meetings of the Committee.

Membership

- The Committee shall have a minimum of three Trustees and a maximum of five Trustees.
- A majority of Committee Trustees must be non-executive Directors of the Trust Board.
- **Quorum:** Two Trustees.
- The Committee will meet as often as is necessary to fulfil its responsibilities but at least three times a year.
- The Committee shall at the first meeting of each academic year elect a member to act as chair of the Committee (the Chair).
- The Committee will elect a temporary replacement from among the Trustees present at the meeting in the absence of the Chair.

Authority

- Each member present in person shall be entitled to one vote.
 - The Finance and Operations Committee is a working committee that can make decisions on behalf of the Trust Board in line with the Scheme of Delegation.
 - It is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference and to seek any information it requires from staff, who are requested to co-operate with the Committee in the conduct of its inquiries.
 - The Board of Trustees delegates financial scrutiny and oversight and can support the Board in maintaining the Trust as a going concern.
 - The Finance and Operations Committee is authorised to obtain independent professional advice if it considers this necessary.
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Duties

Finance

- Review the Annual Budget in detail and to make recommendations to the Board, in preparation for the completion of the three-year budget forecast return (BFR3Y), ensuring rigour and scrutiny in budget management.
 - Review termly the financial performance of the Trust: monitoring statements (including variances against budget and forecast); balance sheet; cashflow forecast.
 - Review the Multi Academy Trust's (MAT) year-end financial statements and reports, ensuring that they reflect best practice.
 - Consider all relevant reports by the Director of Finance, the appointed external auditor, including reports on the MAT accounts, achievement of value for money and the response to any management letters.
 - Completion of the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Checklist and review of the benchmarking dashboards (SRMSAT).
 - Seek Assurance the EFSA returns have been completed. Establish appropriate financial metrics and monitor performance against these.
 - Establish and agree with the Board, the Trust Reserves policy, ensuring expenditure from reserves is in line with such policy.
 - Approve and monitor items of capital expenditure in accordance with the limits determined in the Scheme of Delegation.
 - Review and agree with the Board any proposed financial investments and monitor the performance of these.
 - Assessment and declaration of going concern in budget setting process.
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Business Operations

Health and Safety

- Review and monitor the Health and Safety policy statement to safeguard the health and wellbeing of students, employees, and visitors to the MAT, and make recommendations to the Board.
- Review compliance and Trust audit ratings in respect of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all matters pertaining to this.

Safeguarding

- Ratify the Safeguarding Policy annually.
- Review safeguarding procedures and measures to ensure they are fit for purpose and up to date so that everyone in the organisation is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and knows how to respond to concerns.
- Confirm a lead Trustee for safeguarding and child protection is appointed.

Procurement

- Ensure best value in the acquisition of supplies and services through effective procurement and tendering.

Estates Management

- Engage in strategic planning to develop measurable goals for the ICT, estates management, and facilities of the Trust.
- Approve the estate management strategy plan.
- Ensure that the academies' premises are inspected annually and that a planned and costed statement of priorities is prepared and reviewed.

Strategic Planning

- Consider all relevant reports by the Director of Operations to ensure statutory responsibilities and compliance are achieved.
 - Consider any other matters where requested to do so by the Board.
 - Report at least once a year to the Board on the discharge of the above duties.
 - Make recommendations for ratification in relation to statutory and non-statutory policies and procedures for all Trust operational remits.
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Human Resources

Support to the Executive

- Serve as a forum where the Executive can refer HR matters for consideration, which, subject to the Committee's evaluation, can be rejected, amended, or approved for recommendation to the Board for final approval. The Executive will still take appropriate advice from the Trust's HR provider.

Compliance

- Ensure fairness and equity in recruitment and selection in accordance with the Trust's Equality and Diversity policy and procedures.
- Ensure compliance with safer recruitment policies and procedures.
- Audit completion of the Single Central Record (SCR).
- Monitor compliance with mandatory data returns, such as Gender Pay Gap information, pension auto-enrolment, and apprenticeship levy submissions.
- Monitor the communication and implementation of mandatory policies, including disciplinary, grievance, staff absence, capability management, and appraisal.

Performance Review

- Review detailed HR performance across the Trust, including equality and diversity, wellbeing, and safeguarding policy and procedures.

Strategic Development

- Act as an adviser to the Executive to develop and support the strategic development of HR across the Trust.

Senior Employee Remuneration

- The Finance and Operations Committee has responsibility for the HR function of the Trust, including ensuring that robust processes for performance management are in place. The committee delegates the detailed oversight of the CEO's performance management process to a separate Performance Management Committee, which is responsible for setting objectives, reviewing performance, and making pay recommendations to the Trust Board.
- Ensure that pay and benefits are fair, transparent, and based on proportionality principles. Decisions regarding executive pay must follow a robust, evidence-driven process aligned with role, responsibilities, and performance.
- Agree the approach to the use of an external advisor in the performance management process of the CEO and Headteacher Performance Management Process.
- Receive assurance from Performance Management Committee the CEO performance Management process has been completed in line with the Pay Policy.

- Receive and review pay recommendations from the CEO for Executive Directors and Headteachers for recommendation to the Full Board of trustees.
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General

- At each meeting, consider whether any matters require referral to the Audit and Risk Committee for inclusion in the Trust's risk register.
- Regularly review the Committee's performance, constitution, and terms of reference to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Reviewed and agreed by:

The Board of Trustees – Autumn Term 2024