

NET Academies Trust

Finance and Audit Committee

Summary Remit

Under delegated authority from the NET and NET Academies Trust Boards to:

- develop long term financial plans and budget guidelines;
- scrutinise and approve academy cluster budgets against agreed development plans;
- monitor academy cluster management accounts;
- scrutinise and approve central services budgets against agreed service development and delivery plans;
- monitor central services management accounts;
- scrutinise and approve NET budget against agreed plans;
- monitor NET management accounts;
- arrange and take action as necessary on internal and statutory audits.

NET Academies Trust

Finance and Audit Committee

Terms of Reference (v2.0)

1. Powers of the Trust Board of Directors

- 1.1. The Directors of the Trust Board shall establish the Finance & Audit Committee as Trust committees as empowered by the Trust's Articles of Association (Article 100B).
- 1.2. The Directors shall determine and approve the Committee's Terms of Reference and shall review the Terms at the start of each academic year (Article 101).
- 1.3. The Directors shall determine and approve the delegation of powers, responsibilities and duties to the Committee and shall review this Scheme of Delegation at the start of each academic year (Article 105).
- 1.4. The Directors shall have the right to intervene in the governance of an individual academy where it has serious cause for concern that there is financial mismanagement or failure to operate within budget.
- 1.5. The Trust Scheme of Delegation is attached as [Annex 1](#).

2. Powers of the Finance & Audit Committee

- 2.1. The Committee shall exercise the powers, responsibilities and duties delegated by the Trust Board as set out in the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation, and in particular:
 - 2.1.1. to prepare and recommend to the Trust Board the Trust and Academy Financial Regulations and Procedures to comply with relevant statute and regulation, the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and the decisions of the Directors (SoD 5.1-2);
 - 2.1.2. to review, recommend to the Trust Board and monitor the individual academy annual budgets that are proposed by the Chief Executive, with a specific responsibility to ensure that budgets do not go into deficit (SoD 5.13);
 - 2.1.3. to review, recommend to the Trust Board and monitor the Trust annual budget that consolidates individual academy budgets with Trust central costs and charges, with a specific responsibility to ensure the Trust budget does not go into deficit (SoD 5.5);
 - 2.1.4. to identify and propose to the Trust Board opportunities for the Trust to achieve financial and resource efficiencies for member academies through joint commissioning and procurement;
 - 2.1.5. to review and approve the Trust and Academy Interim Year End financial reports prior to audit (SoD 5.6 & 5.15);
 - 2.1.6. to review and recommend to the Trust Board the appointment and re-appointment of the Trust's auditors (SoD 5.3);
 - 2.1.7. to plan and oversee the statutory audit of Annual Accounts for the Trust and each academy;
 - 2.1.8. to review and recommend to the Trust Board the audited Annual Accounts and Financial Statements in accordance with relevant statute and regulation (SoD 5.8);
 - 2.1.9. to review and recommend to the Trust Board the Trustees Report (SoD 5.9);
 - 2.1.10. to prepare and recommend to the Trust Board and implement the Trust action plan in response to the auditor's management letter (SoD 5.11);

- 2.1.11. to review and approve the annual Accounts Return to the Education Funding Agency (SoD 5.10);
- 2.1.12. to plan, oversee and monitor the internal audit of Trust and academy compliance with the Trust's financial regulations and procedures and to recommend and implement appropriate action to enhance compliance (SoD 5.1-2);
- 2.1.13. to prepare and approve policies relating to the Trust's financial governance and operation including:
 - 2.1.13.1. Procurement;
 - 2.1.13.2. Anti-Fraud and Corruption;
 - 2.1.13.3. Investment;
 - 2.1.13.4. Disposals and write-off of stock assets.
- 2.1.14. to consider and respond to proposed Teachers Annual Pay Award and Support Staff Annual Pay Awards (SoD 3.5-6);
- 2.1.15. to approve expenditure or contracts between the Upper Limit (as per Trust Finance Regulations) and the OJEU limit in force at the time (SoD 6.3);
- 2.1.16. to recommend to the Trust Board expenditure above the OJEU limit having completed the necessary procurement (SoD 6.4);
- 2.1.17. to consider and respond to proposed compensation payments up to £50,000 or the limit set by the Education Funding Agency (SoD 6.8);
- 2.1.18. to review and approve the Asset Management Policy and Plan (SoD 8.1-2);
- 2.1.19. to review and approve the Trust Health & Safety policy (SoD 8.3).

3. Composition and Appointment of the Finance & Audit Committees

- 3.1. The composition of the Finance Committee shall be as follows:
 - 3.1.1. Directors with relevant knowledge, skills and expertise in finance, accountancy, compliance, commerce and business;
 - 3.1.2. Chief Executive;
 - 3.1.3. Trust Finance Director;
 - 3.1.4. Persons with finance, accountancy or commercial expertise who will be appointed by the Trust Board;
 - 3.1.5. Further Trust Directors such that the Committee has a majority of Directors.
- 3.2. The composition of the Audit Committee shall be three Directors with appropriate expertise who shall not be employees of the Trust.
- 3.3. The membership of the Committees shall be detailed as [Annex 2](#).

4. Term of Office and Responsibilities of Committee Members

- 4.1. The Term of Office for all Members is 4 years.
- 4.2. On appointment Members are each required to familiarise themselves and to agree to comply with:
 - 4.2.1. Trust Articles of Association;
 - 4.2.2. Trust Master and Supplementary Funding Agreements;
 - 4.2.3. Trust Financial Regulations;
 - 4.2.4. Academies Finance Handbook;
 - 4.2.5. these Terms;

4.2.6. current relevant financial legislation and guidance for academies.

5. Meetings of the Committee

5.1. The Committee shall normally meet at least once per term and in particular:

5.1.1. The Committee shall meet at the appropriate times set out in the Trust Governance Calendar;

5.1.2. The members will receive notice of each meeting 7 clear days before the date of the meeting;

5.1.3. The agenda, papers and minutes of Committee meetings will sent by the Clerk to the Directors when they are issued to members;

5.1.4. Minutes will be signed by the Committee's Chairs at the next meeting to verify that the minutes are a true record.

5.2. Quorum for a meeting of the Committee will be half the members and a majority of members present being Trust Directors.

5.3. Each question to be decided at a meeting of the Committees shall be determined by a majority of votes of members present and eligible to vote on the question. The Chair shall have the casting vote in the case of equal votes for and against the decision.

6. Appointment of the Committees Chair and Vice Chair

6.1. The Trust Board shall appoint the Chair and Vice Chair.

6.2. The Trust Board shall have the right to remove the Chair and/or Vice Chair.

6.3. The term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair will be 1 year and they shall be appointed at the first meeting of each school year.

7. Appointment of a Clerk

7.1. The Trust Board shall appoint a Clerk to the Committees.

Declaration

The Finance & Audit Committees at their meeting on 06 July 2016 resolved to adopt these Terms of Reference. A copy has been forwarded to the Clerk to the Directors for the formal Trust Board records. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually at the start of the academic year.

Signature
(Chair of the Finance & Audit Committees)

Date of signature

ANNEX 1: Trust Scheme of Delegation

ANNEX 2: Committee membership

NET Academies Trust

Scheme of Delegation (v6.0)

For Cluster Academies

Introduction

The Scheme of Delegation sets out the delegated powers between the different bodies involved in the governance and operation of the Multi Academy Trust and member academies.

The bodies may include:

- Trust Members
- Trust Board of Directors
- Local Governing Bodies
- Academy Forums
- Trust Chief Executive
- Executive Headteacher of the cluster

The delegated powers are broken down into different levels in line with the Trust's principles of governance, leadership and operation. The delegated autonomy for individual academies is aligned with the need for the Trust to fulfil its corporate responsibilities and accountabilities to the Department for Education, Education Funding Agency, Charities Commission, HMRC and Companies House.

The different levels of delegated power are listed below but it should be noted that not every task requires all levels of delegated power to be defined:

- Approve (A)
- Recommend (R)
- Propose (P)
- Develop (D)
- Monitor & Report (M)
- Consulted (C)
- Informed (I)

The Scheme of Delegation should be read in conjunction with the Terms of Reference for the relevant body. While the Scheme is designed to be comprehensive it will not cover every task.

The Trust will also define policies that are Trust-wide, cluster-specific and school specific. A proposed definition is shown in the *Notes* column.

#	Task Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Develop (D), Monitor & Report (M), Consulted (C), Informed (I), Execute (E)	Notes	Board	LGB	CEO	EHT	AF
1.	Governance						
1.1.	Approve Trust Articles of Association	Members only	R		R		
1.2.	Approve Trust Board Terms of Reference		A		R		
1.3.	Approve Trust Scheme of Delegation		A		R		
1.4.	Approve new convertor or sponsored academies joining MAT		A		R		
1.5.	Establish Trust Committees		A		R		
1.6.	Approve Trust Committee Terms of Reference		A		R		
1.7.	Approve LGB Terms of Reference		A	I	R		
1.8.	Approve Academy Forum Terms of Reference		A	C	R		I
1.9.	Establish LGB working groups			A			
1.10.	Appoint Chair of Trust Board		A				
1.11.	Appoint Chair of LGB		A		R		
1.12.	Remove Chair of LGB		A				
1.13.	Appoint (and remove) Chair of AF		A	R	R		
1.14.	Appoint (and remove) LGB members		A	R	R		
1.15.	Appoint (and remove) Chair(s) of Trust Committees		A		R		
1.16.	Appoint (and remove) Trust Committee members		A		R		
1.17.	Appoint (and remove) Clerk to Trust Board		A		R		
1.18.	Appoint (and remove) Clerk to LGB/AF			R	A		
1.19.	Trust Governance Calendar		A		R	C	
1.20.	Approve Directors Expenses Policy	Trust Policy	A				
2.	Trust & Academy Performance, Curriculum and Teaching						
2.1.	Trust Strategic Plan		A		R	C	
2.2.	Academic Performance Targets		AM	RM	C	P	C
2.3.	Academy Performance Review e.g. SEF		A	R	C	P	C
2.4.	Academy 3 year plan		A	RM	C	P	C
2.5.	Academy 1 Year Plan			AM	C	R	C
2.6.	Teaching & Learning Policy	Cluster Policy		AM	C	R	C
2.7.	Curriculum Policy	Cluster Policy		AM	C	R	C
2.8.	Sex Education policy	Cluster Policy		AM	C	R	CM
2.9.	Religious Education policy	Cluster Policy		AM	C	R	CM
2.10.	SEN & Inclusion policy	Cluster Policy		AM	C	R	CM
2.11.	Trust Staff Development Plan				A		
2.12.	Academy Staff Development Plan			C		A	
2.13.	Trust Inset Days		A		R	C	
3.	Staff Policies and Pay						
3.1.	Pay & Remuneration Policy	Trust Policy			R	C	
3.2.	Job Role Salary & Grading Policy	Trust Policy			R	C	
3.3.	Employee Terms & Condition changes		A		P		
3.4.	Trust Staff Annual Pay Award	Trust Policy	A				
3.5.	Teachers Annual Pay Award	Trust Policy	A		P		
3.6.	Support Staff Annual Pay Award	Trust Policy	A		P		
3.7.	Individual Performance Pay Awards	As per Policy		R	A	P	
3.8.	Performance Management Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
3.9.	Disciplinary Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
3.10.	Grievance Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
3.11.	Capability Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
3.12.	Whistleblowing Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	

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3.13.	Recruitment Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
3.14.	Re-structuring & Redundancy Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
3.15.	Employee Health & Safety Policy	Trust Policy	A	M	R	C	
4.	Staff Management						
4.1.	Trust staff plan		A		R		
4.2.	Trust CEO appointment		A				
4.3.	Trust staff appointment		C		A		
4.4.	School staff plan	Part of Business Plan		A	C	R	
4.5.	EHT appointment		A	R	C		
4.6.	Head of School appointments		A	R	C	P	C
4.7.	Senior leadership appointments			A	C	R	C
4.8.	Teacher appointments					A	
4.9.	Support staff appointments					A	
4.10.	Suspension of CEO	As per policy	A				
4.11.	Return of CEO after suspension		A				
4.12.	Dismissal of CEO		A				
4.13.	Suspension of EHT	As per policy	A	C	R		
4.14.	Return of EHT after suspension		A	C	R		
4.15.	Dismissal of EHT		A	C	R		
4.16.	Suspension of Head of School	As per policy		C	A	R	
4.17.	Return of Head of School after suspension			C	A	R	
4.18.	Dismissal of Head of School		A	C	R	P	
4.19.	Suspension of teaching and support staff	As per policy		C		A	
4.20.	Return of teaching and support staff after suspension			C	A	R	
4.21.	Redundancy of school staff		A	C	R	P	
4.22.	Restructuring of school staff		A	C	R	P	
5.	Financial Governance & Management						
5.1.	Trust & Academy Financial Regulations	Audit C'ttee on compliance	A	M	P		
5.2.	Trust & Academy Financial Procedures	Audit C'ttee on compliance	A	M	P		
5.3.	Appoint Trust auditors	Audit C'ttee	A				
5.4.	Trust 3 year Budget Plan		AM		P		
5.5.	Trust 1 year Budget		AM		P		
5.6.	Trust Interim Year End Accounts		A		R		
5.7.	Trust YTD reports		AM		PM		
5.8.	Trust Annual Accounts		A		P		
5.9.	Trustees Report		A		P		
5.10.	Trust Academies Accounts Return to EFA		A		R		
5.11.	Response to Auditor's Management Ltr	Audit C'ttee	A				
5.12.	Academy 3 year Budget Plan	LGB consultation at budget prep. stage	AM	CM	PM	D	
5.13.	Academy 1 year Budget	Part of Business Plan	AM	CM	PM	D	
5.14.	Academy Budget reports	LGB given info. to monitor	A	IM	PM	D	

#	Task Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Develop (D), Monitor & Report (M), Consulted (C), Informed (I), Execute (E)	Notes	Board	LGB	CEO	EHT	AF
		budget against school improvement priorities					
5.15.	Academy Interim Year End Accounts		A	R	P	D	
5.16.	Academy Accounts Return to EFA	New academies	A		R		
6.	Financial Authorisation						
6.1.	Expenditure or contracts up to Lower Limit	As per policy				A	
6.2.	Expenditure or contracts from Lower Limit to Upper Limit	As per policy			A	R	
6.3.	Expenditure or contracts from Upper Limit to OJEU limit	As per policy	A		R	P	
6.4.	Expenditure over OJEU limit	As per policy	A		P		
6.5.	Compensation payments up to £50,000	EFA threshold	A		R		
7.	Academy Policies & Procedures						
7.1.	Academy times, terms and holidays			A	C	R	C
7.2.	Change of Academy Age Range		A	R	C	P	C
7.3.	Expansion of Academy PAN		A	R	C	P	C
7.4.	Extension of Academy provision		A	R	C	P	C
7.5.	Extended services on-site			A	C	R	C
7.6.	Child Welfare & Safeguarding Policy	Trust policy	A	C	R	C	C
7.7.	Attendance Policy	Cluster policy		A	C	R	C
7.8.	Attendance Plan	School plan		A	C	R	C
7.9.	Pupil Premium Policy	Cluster policy		A	C	R	C
7.10.	Pupil Premium Plan	School plan		A	C	R	C
7.11.	Academy Educational Visits Policy	Cluster policy		A	C	R	C
7.12.	Pupil Behaviour & Exclusions Policy	Cluster policy		A	C	R	C
7.13.	Short-term Exclusion	As per policy		A	C	R	
7.14.	Return after short-term exclusion			A	C	R	
7.15.	Permanent Exclusions			A	C	R	
7.16.	Appeals against Permanent Exclusion	Independent panel req.				E	
7.17.	Complaints Policy	Trust policy	A		R		
7.18.	Complaints Appeals	Independent panel req.			E		
7.19.	Admissions Policy		A	R	C	P	C
7.20.	Admissions allocation of places					E	
7.21.	Admissions Appeals	Independent panel req.				E	
7.22.	Academy prospectus	As per Trust Brand g/lines		C		A	C
7.23.	Academy website			C		A	C
7.24.	Academy uniform			C		A	C
8.	Premises & Assets						
8.1.	Asset Management Policy		A		R		
8.2.	Asset Management Plan		A	C	R	C	
8.3.	Health & Safety Policy		A		R		

NET Academies Trust

Finance & Audit Committee Membership

Andrew Churchill Stone (Chair)
Andrew Calderwood
Richard Carr
Nigel Wyrley-Birch
Maxine Evans
Moira Cummins

