



# **PROCUREMENT AND PURCHASING POLICY**

Approved By: Trust Board  
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## **1. POLICY PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles and procedures for acquiring goods, services, and works within the Trust. This policy is designed to ensure that procurement activities are conducted in a manner that is efficient, transparent, and compliant with relevant laws and regulations, while delivering the best value for the Trust's resources.

The objectives of this policy are:

- Value for Money: Achieve the best possible value for the Trust through competitive pricing, quality assurance, and cost-effectiveness.
- Transparency: Promote openness in the procurement process to build trust and ensure fair treatment of all suppliers.
- Compliance: Adhere to legal, regulatory, and internal policy requirements to avoid legal and financial risks.
- Efficiency: Streamline procurement processes to minimise administrative overhead and support timely delivery of goods and services.

## **2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

This Procurement and Purchasing Policy is designed in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, ensuring that all procurement activities within the Trust are conducted in a transparent, competitive, and fair manner.

The policy adheres to the principles outlined in the Academy Trust Handbook, issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which sets financial management and procurement standards for academy trusts.

It also incorporates best practices from HM Treasury's Managing Public Money guidance, ensuring that the Trust achieves value for money in all purchases while maintaining proper controls to prevent fraud and ensure accountability.

## **3. PROCUREMENT PRINCIPLES**

Four principles underpin this policy:

- Competitive Tendering: Engage in competitive tendering for all procurements where applicable, to ensure fairness and achieve value for money.
- Equal Treatment: Provide equal opportunities to all potential suppliers and avoid any form of discrimination.
- Conflict of Interest: Ensure that procurement decisions are free from conflicts of interest and that any potential conflicts are disclosed and managed.
- Ethical Standards: Adhere to high ethical standards, including anti-bribery and anti-corruption practices, and ensure that suppliers comply with similar standards.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Trust Board:** The Trust Board holds overall responsibility for ensuring proper financial management across the Trust. The Board approves the Procurement Policy and any significant amendments.

**Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee is tasked with reviewing the Procurement Policy and recommending it to the Trust Board for approval. The committee also monitors compliance with the policy and assesses performance in relation to set objectives.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO): The CEO, acting in their role as Accounting Officer, is accountable for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that all activities are aligned with the Trust's strategic goals.

Chief Financial Officer (CFO): The CFO, in collaboration with the wider Finance Team, is responsible for managing the Trust's financial operations, including the oversight of all procurement, ensuring spending decisions align with Trust priorities.

All Staff: Staff involved in procurement must follow the Policy, get required approvals, and comply with financial rules. They should aim for best value, avoid conflicts of interest, and ensure fairness. Any concerns must be reported to their manager or the CFO. Staff must also complete any required training.

## **5. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES**

### Procurement Planning

Effective procurement planning is crucial for ensuring that the process of acquiring goods and services meets the operational needs and strategic goals of the Trust. This phase involves identifying and assessing the needs of the organisation, securing necessary budget approvals, and setting the stage for a successful procurement process. Proper planning helps to avoid delays and ensures that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

- Needs Assessment: Conduct a thorough assessment of the needs for goods or services. Define clear specifications and requirements based on operational needs and strategic objectives.
- Budget Approval: Ensure that sufficient funds are allocated and approved for the procurement before initiating the process. Verify that budgetary provisions align with the Trust's financial planning.

### Procurement Methods

Selecting the appropriate procurement method is essential for managing costs and ensuring fair competition. Different methods apply depending on the value of the purchase, each with its own requirements for documentation and supplier engagement. By adhering to these methods, the Trust can achieve best value for money while maintaining transparency and fairness in the procurement process.

- Low Value Purchases: For procurements up to £10,000, obtain prices from at least two suppliers to secure best value.
- Intermediate Purchases: For procurements between £10,000 and £50,000, obtain formal written quotations from at least three suppliers. Prepare and maintain records of the quotations and the evaluation process.
- High-Value Purchases: For procurements exceeding £50,000, conduct a formal tendering process.

This includes:

- Advertisement: Publicly advertise the procurement opportunity through appropriate channels to ensure transparency and attract a competitive field of suppliers.
- Tender Documentation: Prepare comprehensive tender documents outlining specifications, terms, conditions, and evaluation criteria.
- Bid Submission: Provide sufficient time for suppliers to submit bids and ensure that all submissions are received by the specified deadline.

- Bid Evaluation: Evaluate bids based on predefined criteria, including price, quality, delivery time, and compliance with specifications. Document the evaluation process and rationale for the award decision.
- Award Decision: Award the contract to the supplier offering the best overall value for money, as determined through the evaluation process.

#### Contract Management

Once a contract is awarded, effective contract management is key to ensuring that both parties meet their obligations and that the Trust receives the expected value from the agreement. This involves setting clear terms, monitoring performance, and addressing any issues that arise throughout the contract's duration. A robust contract management framework supports the Trust in maintaining high standards and achieving successful outcomes.

- Contract Terms: Develop clear and comprehensive contract terms that outline deliverables, performance standards, payment terms, and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- Monitoring and Review: Regularly monitor supplier performance against contract terms. Conduct periodic reviews to ensure compliance and address any issues or deviations.
- Performance Management: Implement a performance management framework to assess supplier performance and address any areas of concern. Maintain records of performance reviews and any corrective actions taken.