

TARKA LEARNING PARTNERSHIP



**FINANCE POLICY
AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Tarka Learning Partnership maintains and develops systems of financial control, which conform to the requirements of both propriety and of good financial management. It is essential that these systems operate properly to meet the requirements of the Trust's Master Funding Agreement and Supplemental Funding Agreements with the Department of Education.

The Trust must comply with the principles of financial control outlined in the Academies Financial Handbook guidance published annually by the DfE. This policy expands on that guidance and forms the manual detailing information on the academy's accounting procedures and systems. It should be read by all staff involved with financial systems and accountability.

2. Principles

All Trust members, Trustees, governors and staff will manage their affairs in accordance with the high standards detailed in 'Guidance on Codes of Practice for Board Members of Public Bodies' and in line with the seven principles of public life

- **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity**
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in their performance or their official duties
- **Objectivity**
In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merits.
- **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness**
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interests clearly demands
- **Honesty**
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.
- **Leadership**
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

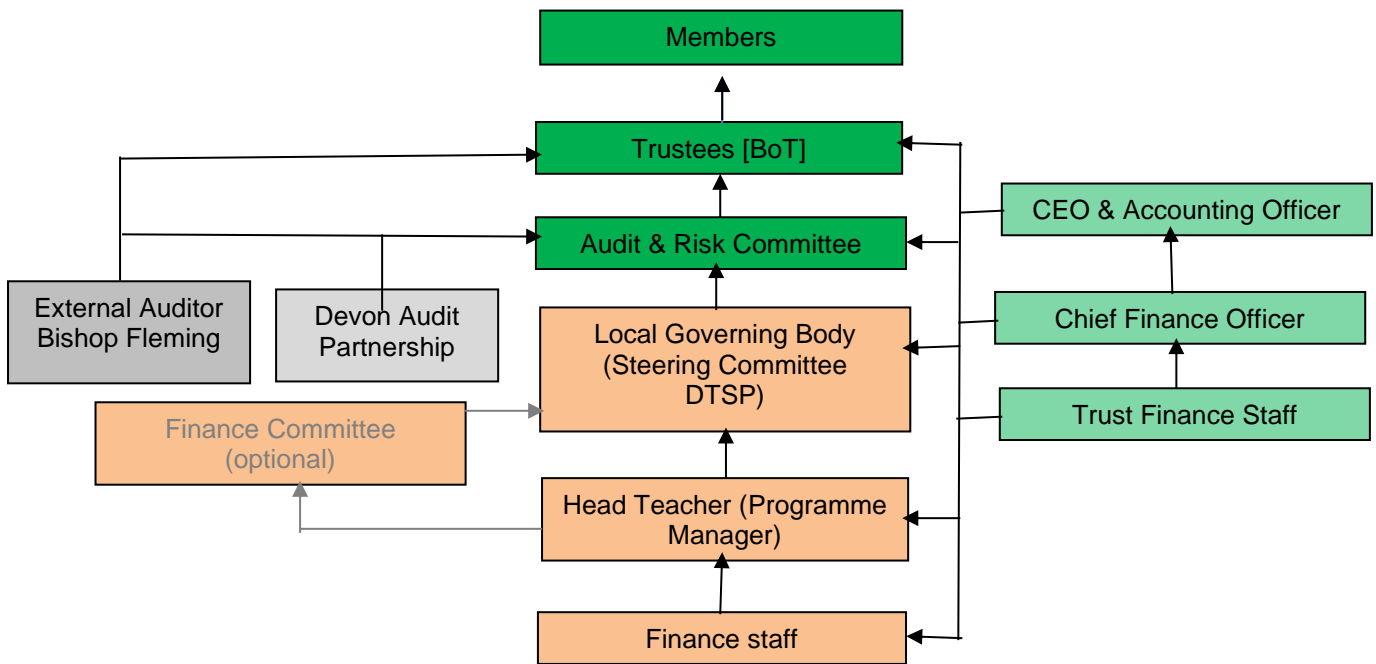
3. Organisation and Responsibilities.

The Trust has defined the responsibilities of each person involved in the administration of the Trust's finances to avoid the duplication or omission of functions and provide a framework of accountability for governors and staff.

3.1 Definition Directors /Trustees

Companies House, Charities Regulations and Government documentation for Academies refer to Directors and Trustees of a company. In legal terms the two are on and the same. The Trust uses the term Trustee and this relates directly to the term Director as referenced in the Articles of Association.

3.2 Organisation Structure:



3.3. Members

The Members have oversight of the organisation's activities and hold the Trustees to account. Members appoint the Trustees. Their financial responsibilities are to

- Appoint the Trust's Auditors
- Receive the Annual Financial Statements for the Trust
- Appoint the CEO as Trustee

3.4 Trustees

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for administration of the Trust's finances. The main financial responsibilities of the Trustees are prescribed in the Master Funding Agreement between the Academy and the DfE. The main responsibilities include:

- Ensure grants from the DfE, and all Restricted funding is used for the purposes intended
- Maintain robust financial oversight of the Trust which support maintaining the Trust as a going concern
- Approve the Trust's Financial Policies and Procedures
- Approve the annual budgets and any material changes
- Take a longer-term view of the Trusts financial plans
- Ensure a Scheme of Delegation is in place
- Ensure Terms of Reference are agreed for any Committees
- Ensure assets are managed and estates are kept in a safe working condition
- Ensure accurate accounting records are maintained
- Ensure the budget monitoring statements are a true and accurate record on income and expenditure
- Approve the Annual Financial Statements for the Trust
- Appoint a Clerk to the Board who is someone other than a Trustee, or Chief Executive of the Trust
- Notify RSC of planned recruitment of CEO post
- Publish statutory information on the Trusts website
- Make recommendation on appointment of Auditor every 5 years

3.5 Audit & Risk Committee

The main financial responsibilities of the Audit & Risk Committee are detailed in their Terms of Reference, these include:

- Ensuring the annual accounts are produced in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 1985 and the DfE guidance issued to academies;

- Reviewing the reports of the Internal Auditor and External Auditors on the effectiveness of the financial procedures and controls and ensure there is a reasonable & timely response from the trust management team to the findings. These reports must also be made available to the Bod
- Ensure the programme of internal scrutiny includes financial and non-financial controls and risk management procedures are operating effectively.
- Appoint internal auditors who are independent of the Trust and of the Trusts external auditors.
- To review recommendations for pay and act as the first Committee for appeals

3.6 Local Governing Body [LGB]

The LGB has responsibility for administration of the Academy's finances. The main financial responsibilities of the local governing Body are prescribed in the Scheme of Delegation between the Trust and the Academy. The main responsibilities include:

- Recommendation to the BoT for the approval of the annual budget and any material changes
- Oversight of the FSoD as per [Appendix 1](#) of this policy
- Ensure accurate accounting records are maintained as set out in this policy
- Regular monitoring of actual expenditure and income against budget.
- Authorising and awarding contracts up to the amount stated in the FSoD
- Ensuring any guidance and advice received from the BoT, External or Internal Audit are acted upon.

3.7 Local Finance Committees

LGB can elect to delegate areas of financial responsibility to a Committee. In doing so it must ensure that:-

- Meetings can be held within the timeframe for the annual cycle of business for the Trust.
- Terms of Reference have been approved by the LGB.
- Workflows are clearly understood at Trust and Local level and demonstrated in the FSoD

3.8 Chief Executive Officer [CEO]

The CEO has overall executive responsibility for the Trust. The CEO retains responsibilities for:

- Signatory on the Trust Bank Account

The Academies Financial Handbook identifies the CEO as the Accounting Officer who is personally responsible to the BoT for:

- Regularity and propriety, ensuring that the trusts property & assets are under control of the Trustees and measures are in place to prevent loss or misuse including the use of Asset Registers across the Trust
- Prudent and economic administration keeping full and accurate accounting records to support the annual statutory accounts
- Avoidance of waste and extravagance through efficient and effective use of available resources;
- Separation of duties ensuring bank accounts, financial systems and financial records are operated by more than one person

The Accounting Officer has the duty to take action if the BoT/LGB is contemplating a course of action, which he or she considers an infringement of propriety or regularity. Objections should be put in writing to the BoT and details sent to the Permanent Secretary and the Trust's external auditors.

The Accounting Officer may appoint others to assist in these responsibilities. The delivery of the detailed accounting processes for the Trust have been delegated to the Chief Finance Officer

3.9 Chief Financial Officer [CFO]

The CFO leads strategic and operational and technical financial management across the trust and has responsibility for

- Ensuring sound and appropriate financial governance and risk management arrangements are in place
- Preparing and monitoring of budgets for the central team
- Preparing & monitoring of consolidated trust-wide budget information

- Ensuring delivery of the annual accounts
- The day to day leadership & management of financial issues including the establishment and operation of suitable accounting systems;
- The management of Trust's financial position at strategic and operational level, including development of Financial Policies
- The maintenance of effective systems of internal control;
- Ensuring that the annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the trust;
- Preparation of management accounts
- Ensuring forms and returns are sent to the DfE in line with their reporting deadlines.
- Provide support service to schools
- Bank Signatory and management of Bank Mandates
- Liaison with payroll, over the setup of structures for the organisation
- Oversight of VAT arrangements.
- Management of the Trust's Service Level Agreements
- Authorising orders and the award of contracts up to the amount stated in the FSoD
- Signing Contracts

3.10 Trust Finance Officers

Finance staff for the Trust work under the direction of the CFO and can assist in any aspect of Trust finance. Main duties include

- Bank reconciliation
- BACs runs
- Month and Year end processing
- Management of the Budget Planning and Accountancy Software
- Payroll reconciliation and collation of staff claims for payroll
- VAT returns
- Cashflow
- Support to schools
- Trust procurement
- Reporting and Budget setting and monitoring

3.10 Academy Head Teachers

The Head Teacher has responsibility for the Academy including:

- Approving new staff appointments within the establishment (subject to the SoD.)
- Authorising contracts up to the amount stated in the FSoD reporting these decisions to the LBG
- Working with Trust staff to set a balance budget which meets the academy's needs and plans for the longer term
- Receive reports and review the budget on an interim basis
- Oversees compliance to this policy in their academies
- Have regard for Procurement Policy when making planning purchases for goods or services

3.11 School Finance Staff

It is expected that where practically possible duties will be separated in schools.

The School Business Manager / Finance Lead will work in close collaboration with the Head Teacher through whom they are responsible to the governors. The main responsibilities of the School Business Manager / Finance lead are

- Working with the Head Teacher and Trust staff to set a balanced budget which meets the schools needs and plans for the longer term
- Monitor the academy's financial position during the year
- Report to the Headteacher, LGB & CFO
- The day to day management of financial issues within the academy
- The management of academy's financial position
- The maintenance of effective systems of internal control as per this policy;
- Preparation of staff claims and investigation of differences in payroll reconciliation.

- Ensuring assets are recorded in the Trusts Asset Management System
- Management of the Academy's locally agreed Service Level Agreements
- Have regard for the Trust's Procurement Policy when purchasing goods and services
- Authorising orders and the award of contracts up to the amount stated in the FSoD
- Overseeing day to day financial processing
- Managing users in the finance system keeping a list of Users as per [Appendix 2](#)

For separation of duties where-ever it is practically possible these duties should be undertaken by other Finance Staff within schools who work closely with the School Business Manager/Finance Lead

- Day to day running of the schools income collection software
- Cash collection
- banking
- Order and invoice processing

3.12 Deputy Head Teacher

The Deputy Head Teacher will assume the financial responsibilities if the Head Teacher is absent.

3.13 Other Staff

All staff are responsible for the security of Academy's property, for avoiding loss or damage, for ensuring economy and efficiency in the use of resources and conformity with the requirements of the Academy's financial procedures.

4 Register of Business Interests

It is vital that trust officials and staff act, and are seen to act, impartially. All members, trustees, governors, trust leadership staff and senior leadership staff within each school are required to complete a Declaration of Business Interests. [Appendix 3](#)

Declarations should include all business and pecuniary (monetary) interests such as directorships, shareholdings and other appointments of influence within a business or other organisation. They should also include interests of related persons such as a parent, spouse, child, cohabitee and business partner where that person could exert influence over a trustee or member of staff.

The existence of a register of business interests does not detract from the duty of all to declare interests whenever they are relevant to matters being discussed by the BoT, LGB or its Committee or at leadership meetings. Where an interest has been declared, the interested party should not attend that part of the meeting.

It is the role of the Clerk to Trustees / Governors to ensure the Register of Business Interests are up to date for each setting. The Register of Business Interests are to be published on the Academy and Trusts websites.

4.1 Related Party Transactions

There may be times when payments are made to a related party for wholly justifiable reasons. In these instances Trust protocols as per this policy will be observed and the names of the parties and the amounts of the transactions will be disclosed in the Financial Statements for the financial year in which the transactions took place.

Where a supplier is a related party the goods and services will be supplied to the Trust on the basis of direct cost plus indirect costs, with no element of profit; the Statement of Assurance in [Appendix 4](#) shall be completed.

Where the individual supply or the cumulative value of a supply with a related party will exceed £20,000 within one financial year this must be reported to the ESFA via their on-line form.

Suppliers in the finance system who have a related party connection will be flagged to enable schools to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

4.2 Novel or Contentious Transactions

Novel, or contentious transactions will be referred to the ESFA for explicit prior authorisation. Novel payments are those for which the academy has no previous experience or are outside of the range of normal business activity for the Trust. Contentious transactions are those which might give rise to criticism of the trust by Parliament, the public and/or the media.

4.3 Payments to Members, Trustees, Governors

Members, Trustees and Governors within the Tarka Learning Partnership undertake their roles on a voluntary basis. No Payment will be made to any Member/Trustee/Governor unless such payment is permitted by the Articles of Association and comply with the terms of any relevant agreement with the Secretary of State.

Reimbursement of necessary expenses is detailed in the Trustees and Governors Allowances Policy.

5 Financial Planning

Both medium and short-term financial plans will be prepared by the Academies and the Trust. These plans are prepared to inform strategic development planning processes for the next 3 years.

The Strategic Plan identifies the development plan priorities over the medium term and the expected level of resources required.

The schools Improvement Plan provides the framework for the annual budget. The annual budget is a detailed statement of the expected resources available to the Academy and the planned use of those resources during the year

5.1 Financial Benchmarking

Financial benchmarking is part of the strategic financial planning process to allocate resources to maximise pupil performance. It is a tool to identify opportunities for change and should be used in context with other performance indicators.

The benchmarking website for schools can be accessed at <https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/>

The schools efficiency tool kit can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>

6 Annual Budget Planning & Monitoring

6.1 Budget Planning

The budget process follows an annual planning cycle which is contained in [Appendix 5](#). The CFO will update this cycle in line with ESFA requirements annually and send to all LGB's.

All annual budgets will reflect the best estimate of the resources available for the forthcoming year and will detail how those resources will be utilised establishing clear links to support the objectives identified in the Improvement Plan.

The budget planning process will incorporate the following elements:-

- Forecasts of likely pupil/trainee numbers to estimate the amount of grant/income receivable
- Review of other income sources
- An integrated approach to the delivery of the curriculum
- Review of past performance against budgets
- Identification of potential efficiency and budget containment actions
- Annual review of expenditure headings to reflect known changes and expected variations in costs e.g. pay increases, inflation or other anticipated changes.

The draft budget should be presented to the LGB with a supporting report to make a recommendation for approval to the BoT. Once the budget is approved by the BoT this should be communicated to all responsible budget holders to ensure they are aware of the overall budgetary constraints.

The budget should be seen as a working document which may need revising throughout the year as circumstances change. Any revision should be reported to the LGB. Any substantial changes must be approved in accordance with the FSoD.

All annual budgets will be consolidated for the purposes of Statutory reported.

6.2 Budget Monitoring

The process of monitoring actual expenditure against budget is continuous. Day to day responsibility for monitoring and control lies with budget holders and should be closely monitored by the School Business Manager/Finance lead as part of regular budget monitoring processes.

Any potential overspends against the budget must in the first instance be discussed with the Head Teacher or School Business Manager.

Monitoring reports should be provided to the Head Teachers and LGB at least half-termly accompanied by a report from the School Business Manager/Finance Lead.

The BoT will review, at least half-termly the Trust's consolidated financial position and individual school financial performance. The BoT may invite representatives from any academy to attend these meetings if required.

The Head Teacher (or persons with delegated authority within the school) will meet with the CFO (or Trust Finance Officer) at least biannually to review the schools budget, monitor expenditure and review future plans.

The Original budget must be locked and published in the Budget Planning Software and set in the Accounting software, budgets should be named with the date it was imported into the finance system and the note section completed with the date reported to governors. In year changes must be made in the Budget Planning Software and imported into Finance Software to update the 'Current budget' which will record in-year changes against the Original budget. An audit trail of all virements made after the approval of the original budget must be kept. Revised Budgets will be locked and published minimally in line with the Budget Cycle in [Appendix 5](#)

7 Accounting Systems

7.1 Financial Accounting System

The Trust uses Access Accounting System and Budget Planning Software. User rights within 'Access' are defined with a unique ID and password and managed by the central team. Full support for the use of the Access software can be found upon login from the Access Workspace

- All financial transactions relating to the activities of the Trust must be recorded using Access Accounting software. There must be a clear audit trail for all financial transactions from the original documentation to accounting records. Finance records must be stored for 7 years in accordance with the Companies Act.
- Only authorised staff will be permitted access to the accounting records, which should be securely retained when not in use.
- Authorisation and supervisory controls should be adequate to ensure transactions are properly recorded or that errors are identified.
- All records should be protected against unauthorised modifications, destruction, disclosure or loss whether by accident or intention.
- The finance system is cloud-hosted, meets requirements of GDPR and has robust regular daily backups.

7.2 Accounting system setup

Each organisation within the Trust, including the Trust Central team has its own Budget Planning and Accounting Software database.

Staff within each setting will have access to their database only
Central Trust staff will have access to all databases

7.3 Supplier and Customer Management

The set up and amendments to Suppliers and Customers will be strictly controlled and managed by the central finance team. Requests to set up a new supplier should be made by submission of information on supplier headed notepaper or using Supplier request / amendment form in [Appendix 6](#)

Bank details for suppliers can only be supplied on company letterhead or from a company email address.

Suppliers must be set up in the system prior to orders being placed.

Staff and parents will **not** be set up as suppliers in the Accounting software. A generic 'Staff' Supplier and 'Parent' supplier is set up for recording of refunds/reimbursements made via direct bank BACs payments. The supporting information will provide the specific detail for each transaction

Requests to set up a customer or amendments to an existing customer should be submitted to the central team using Appendix 9. Request to set up a Customer

7.4 Transaction Processing

Processing by the Central Team

- All processes across all ledgers
- Within and across all databases
- All journal transactions, including month and year end processes in all ledgers
- Cash Book management including reconciliation of the central bank account
- BACs and direct payment processing
- Fixed Assets - capitalisation and depreciation transactions
- Reporting at all levels

Processing within schools

- Purchase ledger: Requisition, order and invoice processing
- Sales Ledger invoicing
- Cashbook Journals for non-invoiced income
- Expenses, credit card & direct debit processing for Multipay cards, reimbursements and direct debits
- Reporting

8 Payroll

All payroll transactions will be coded as per the Trust's Chart of Accounts.

8.1 Staff Appointments:

Each school will manage its staff appointments in accordance with relevant TLP policies and procedures and the Trust Governance Scheme of Delegation. Authorisation of Payroll documentation is laid out in the FSoD for each setting.

8.2 Payroll Administration

The Academy's payroll is outsourced to HROne Payroll Services

All Payroll transactions relating to TLP staff, permanent or casual, will be processed through the payroll system. Payments for employment will not be made to staff through any other mechanism.

All new appointments, leavers, changes to contracts or personal details are to be notified to HROne using the appropriate on-line form in iTrent (for guidance contact payroll payrollacademy@devon.gov.uk) Forms should be completed and submitted by an authorised officer and signed off in accordance with the FSoD.

All personnel files shall be stored in a lockable cabinet or lockable office. Only the Head Teacher and Personnel staff will have access to staff files but individuals can request to see their own files in line with data protection policies. Personnel files will also be made available to internal & external auditors and OfSTED on request.

Staff personal details and contract information must be kept up to date in the Trusts MIS system.

Absence records are must be maintained by each school. Absence and unpaid leave must notified to payroll using the HROne iTrent system.

8.3 Overtime and monthly Claims

All staff claims for overtime must have the prior approval of a school leader.

Monthly claims for overtime / hours paid at a different grade / casual claims and supply are to be collated and entered into iTrent at each school by 10th of month for claims to the end of the previous month. The final claims report produced from iTrent prior to the payrun should be signed off in accordance with the FSoD and supporting evidence such as supply claims sheet retained for future reference. The final claims spreadsheet should be emailed to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk to assist with payroll reconciliation.

8.4 Payments to Individuals

All partner schools and agencies within TLP will comply with the procedures laid down on determining employment or self-employment of individuals.

Whenever the services of an individual are engaged, a decision needs to be made regarding their employment status. Should the person be treated as:

- An employee and be paid via the payroll system with tax & NI deducted? - set up a casual contract in iTrent using online forms
- An intermediary Worker via invoice with NI deducted? through iTrent
- Self Employed? – by BACs Via an invoice

Determining employment status is the responsibility of the engager. This means that it is your responsibility to ensure that appropriate tax and National Insurance deductions are made.

This must be communicated to all members of staff within your setting who may make arrangements with an individual or a company for services. TLP has comprehensive guidance on how to check the employment status of an individual which will be issued to the Business Manager of each setting or is available from the finance@tarkatrust.org.uk and ask for IR35 Guidance for Schools

If, as part of an audit, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) discover that an individual has been incorrectly treated as self-employed, then your school would be liable for the tax and National Insurance that should have been deducted. In addition, fines and interest could be imposed, all of which would be charged against your budget.

The ESS assessment tool can be found on the HMRC website at www.gov.uk/employment-status-indicator

You can rely on the ESS outcome as evidence of a worker's status for tax/NICs/VAT purposes if both of the following apply:

- Your answers to the ESS questions accurately reflect the terms and conditions under which the worker provides their services
- The ESS has been completed by the engager or their authorised representative (if a worker completes the ESS tool the result is only indicative and cannot be used for HMRC audit purposes).

This assessment should be supported with the evidence from Appendix 3 of the IR35 Guidance

HMRC are very clear that no assumptions can be made regarding employment status. It is strongly recommended that the questionnaire is completed with the worker present.

An ESS check must be carried out::

- Every time you engage someone for the first time even if they have previously carried out work in another school.
- Each time you engage someone you have paid previously if they are undertaking a different type of work/ circumstances are different.

- If the terms of engagement change.

If the engagement becomes an ongoing arrangement, it is likely that the outcome may change to that of employee. Future payments to the individual or business for exactly the same type of work can be made by completing an Intermediary Worker Engagement form

All outcomes from the ESS tool should be retained and in the case of payment via accompany the invoice and be scanned into the system. They should contain the name of the person carrying out the check.

For any specific questions or advice regarding the outcome, you may also contact the HMRC Status Customer Service Team on 0300 1232326.

8.5 Payments and Monitoring

All salary payments are made by BACS.

HROne submit payroll reports prior to salary payments being dispatched detailing costs and individuals payment details. A BACS report is also submitted. The SFO will undertake a sensibility check whenever possible to ensure the data does not contain major errors prior to salaries being paid.

The SFO will run the reconciliation of payroll within ACCESS Budget Planning Software and supply each school with their individual detailed report. Schools **must** investigate any discrepancies and notify the SFO within 24 hours if there are any changes required to the payroll BACs run after which it will be authorised for payment by the Central team.

The payroll system automatically calculates the deductions due from salaries to comply with current legislation. HROne are authorised to make BACS payments from the Trust's Bank Account by direct payment for the amounts of the deductions to the following agencies: Local Government Pension Scheme, Teachers Pensions, Prudential Teachers AVC's, Unison & GMB, Court Orders by the 7th of the month following the pay run and to HMRC by the 19th of the month following the pay run.

The SFO will enter the payroll data into the Accounting system at the earliest opportunity.

9 Value for Money (VFM) Procedures

All orders for goods and services are subject to the following rules concerning quotes and tenders a summary of thresholds is listed below.

Reference should be made to the Trust's Procurement Policy to support purchasing decisions to ensure best practice in this area.

9.1 Orders of £1,999 and below

Consideration to be given to alternative suppliers if appropriate to the situation

9.2 Orders over £2,000 but less than £4,999

Evidence of comparison through web/catalogue search from reputable sources or verbal quotes (supplied as evidence at requisition stage) should be obtained to identify the best source of the goods and services except:

- where the service is being provided by a contractor to maintain or extend systems they have previously installed or are under contract to maintain.
- have provided quotes and tenders for a similar service within the past 12 months where they were the selected supplier.
- Where a Trust has run a process for works/goods or services for small works and they are the nominated as the preferred supplier in this category

Details should be recorded on or attached to the requisition/order form.

9.3 Orders over £- £5,000] but less than £14,999

At least 2 written quotations should be obtained for all orders to identify the best sources of the goods/services. Written details of quotations should be attached to the requisition form for audit purposes. Except: a) where the service is being provided by a contractor to maintain or extend systems they have previously installed or are under contract to maintain.
b) have provided quotes and tenders for a similar service within the past 12 months where they were the selected supplier.
c) or where a Trust has run a process for works/goods or services and they are the nominated as the preferred supplier in this category

9.4 Orders over £15,000 but less than £24,999

At least 3 written quotations should be obtained for all orders to identify the best sources of goods/ services. Written details of quotations should be attached to the requisition for audit purposes unless the supplier has been through a Trust tender process that meets the specifications of the goods/services being procured and is named as the Trusts.

9.5 Orders over £25,000 - £49,999

A minimum of three quotations to be obtained in writing to a written specification, appropriate to the situation, by a specified date and time. Meetings with suppliers & references to be taken up prior to the award of the contract. Evidence to be attached to the requisition form. Formal tenders may be requested at his level if it is felt appropriate..

9.6 Orders over £50,000 – E U Threshold

Current limits and guidance for EU Threshold should be checked when considering the appropriate route for tender. Goods or services ordered with a value over £50,000 or for a series of contracts in which the total exceeds £50,000 must be subject to formal tendering procedures as detailed below. All paperwork relating to the tender must be kept securely.

9.7 Orders over E U Threshold

Purchases over the EU Thresholds are by law subject to EU Public Procurement Directives for the advertising and Award of Contracts. Separate guidance is available. These processes will be undertaken by the Central Finance Team, through existing Government Frameworks or other professional services provided by others. From 1st January 2021, following the end of the transition period from the exit from the EU, public procurement notices will need to be advertised through Find a Tender in line with guidance on public procurement.

10 Forms of Tender

There are three forms of tender procedure: open, restricted and negotiated and the circumstances in which each procedure should be used are described below:

The Trust's Procurement Policy should be read and followed in conjunction with this policy

10.1 Open Tender:

This is where potential suppliers are invited to tender. The school must agree with the CFO how best to advertise for suppliers. Whilst this is the preferred method of tendering, as it is most conducive to competition and the propriety of public funds there are additional costs that could negate potential savings.

10.2 Restricted Tenders:

This is where suppliers are specifically invited to tender and are appropriate where:

- There is a need to maintain a balance between the contract value and administrative costs,
- A large number of suppliers are likely to come forward under open tender or because the nature of the goods are such that only specific suppliers can be expected to meet the specified requirements,
- The costs of publicity and advertising are likely to outweigh the potential benefits of open tendering.
- Retendering where original tender process was through an open tender exercise

10.3 Negotiated Tender:

The terms of the contract may be negotiated with one or more chosen suppliers. This is appropriate in specific circumstances:

- The above methods have resulted in either no or unacceptable tenders,
- Only one or very few suppliers are available,
- Extreme urgency exists,
- Additional deliveries by existing supplier are justified

10.4 Preparing for Tender

Preparation of documentation to support the tender process should be carried out in line with the Trust's Procurement Policy

10.5 Invitation to Tender

An invitation to tender should include the following:

- Introduction/background
- Scope and objectives of the project
- Technical requirements
- Implementation of the project
- Terms and conditions of the tender
- Form of response

10.6 Tender Acceptance Procedures

The tender invitation will state the time and date by which the completed tender document should be received by the academy. Tender submissions can be received in plain envelopes clearly stating they contain tender documents they must be

- Date stamped and marked with the time of receipt
- Stored, unopened, in a secure place prior to tender opening
- Tenders received after the deadline should not normally be accepted or electronically
- The integrity of the data and confidentiality of the tenders must be preserved. The tenders must not be viewed until after the time limit for submitting them has expired The submission method must allow for the time and date of receipt to be recorded
- The authorised person must not allow access to others until after the deadline for submission has passed

10.8 Tender Opening Procedures

All tenders should be opened at the same time and tender details should be recorded and signed. Two persons should be present at the opening of the tenders this should include someone on the leadership team. In some circumstances this could be delegated to an agent who has been employed by the Trust/Academy to undertake the tendering process i.e. a firm of architects:

10.9 Tender Evaluation Procedures

The evaluation process should involve at least two people. Those involved should disclose all interests, which may influence their objectivity. If there is a potential conflict of interest then that person must withdraw from the tendering process.

Those involved must take care not to accept gifts or hospitality from potential suppliers that could be seen to compromise their independence.

Full records should be kept of all criteria used for evaluation and a report should be prepared to the BoT

The accepted tender should be one that is economically most advantageous unless it can be demonstrated that this is not the best option for the Academy and other factors outweigh any monetary savings.

The CFO will determine if a member of Trust staff will be involved in this process.

11 Purchasing

The Trust's Procurement Policy sets out the requirements for best practice to support buying and purchasing. The Trust will aim to achieve best value for money for all its purchases ensuring that services are delivered in the most economical, efficient and effective way, within available resources, and with independent validation of performance achieved wherever practicable. The CFO is responsible for ensuring procedures are in place for testing the market, placing of orders and paying for goods and services by following the general principles of:

- Probity – an approach to all interested parties in the disclosure of information that lends itself to necessary scrutiny.
- Accountability – the process whereby individuals are responsible for their actions and decisions.
- Fairness – that all those dealt with by the Trust are dealt with on a fair and equitable basis.

Each setting will ensure that there is a clear separation of duties within the finance team, which would, if combined, enable one individual transaction to record a complete transaction.

11.1 Orders for Goods and services

Budget Holders, or those authorised to raise orders on their behalf, should raise an order for goods or services through the ACCESS Web Portal. If a particular supplier is required and they are not available on the system the procedures in 7.3 should be followed.

Where the web-portal is not being used a manual requisition form (Appendix 8) should be submitted to the finance officer within each setting.

Where the value of an order is over £2,000, the appropriate evidence should be scanned on to the system to demonstrate that the VFM exercise has taken place – as per section 9.

Orders will be authorised only if the VFM documentation is present and correct. Advice about suppliers or obtaining best value is available from the School Business Manager in each school or the SFO. Goods must not be ordered from Ebay and Amazon should not be used for the purposes of purchasing electrical goods unless exception has been approved by the Trust.

- Once a requisition has been raised it will pass through the relevant ACCESS web flows for approval as per the FSoD
- These will be converted to an official order and emailed or posted to the supplier.
- Telephone/direct verbal ordering will be permitted for food supplies for catering and only in other exceptional situations where raising an official order is not practicable. In such cases, an official confirmation order should be raised as soon as possible.
- Goods should only be ordered for delivery to the school office address. Delivery to a home address should only be for exceptional circumstances and agreed with the central team prior to the order being placed

11.2 Delivery of Goods and Services

On receipt of goods a member of staff will

- Check the goods received matched to the delivery note and sign the note to confirm this.
- Check the delivery note against the original order to ensure the correct goods have been dispatched
- Investigate discrepancies
- Dispatch goods to the budget holder
- File the delivery note pending receipt of the invoice to be scanned into the system when it is processed for payment. Ensure that the goods received are of acceptable quality and any goods that are rejected must be notified to the School Business Manager within 2 days of delivery.
- Enter qualifying goods onto the Asset Register (see section 18)

11.3 Processing of Invoices

Payment for supplies and services will be made upon receipt of an invoice when

- The invoice is arithmetically correct
- Prices are correct
- VAT has been treated correctly

No photocopied or faxed invoices will be paid but invoices sent electronically by email are acceptable.

All invoices must be processed through the ACCESS accounting software subject to the agreed workflow processes. At least two people must be involved in the process of entering and authorising invoices prior to being made available for payment.

Invoices may only be settled against a Multi Pay Card where there is a time restraint such as publication of recruitment advertising. A note should be made on the invoice of the reason for payment by card and held with the card holder's statement.

All invoices must be scanned into the system upon processing, together with the delivery note if available.

Authorisation of the invoice by the budget holder in the ACCESS accounting system will be taken as having received goods that are fit for purpose or being accountable for the use of services supplied.

11.4 Payment by Statement

Where there are many non-order invoices such as catering supplies, these may be paid by statement where the following processes are followed.

- Invoices for the period are collated pending arrival of the statement for that period
Invoices/credit notes are checked against the statement and the total must agree to the statement total
- Copies of missing invoices/credit notes must be obtained prior to payment
- Payment should be made for the total of the statement and the payment reference must be your **Supplier Account Number followed by the statement period**
- There should be two lines entered if necessary to ensure that VAT is legitimately accounted for
- As a minimum the statement must be scanned into the system. If the file size allows then invoices should also be scanned with the statement as one document.
- The statement must be retained with all the corresponding invoices and be available for audit

11.5 Payments to Suppliers

Payment via the BACs system will be generated by the central finance team and authorised in accordance with the Bank Mandate. Only in exceptional circumstances should payment be made by cheque or card.

Payment by cheque will only be made where the Trust has been unable to verify a change request to bank account details or in the interest of fraud prevention i.e: high value payments to contractors where the risk of being targeted for fraud is significantly higher.

11.6 Payments by Direct Debit

Direct Debits can be a cost-efficient way of paying suppliers provided these services are secure.

Direct debits can only be approved and set up by the central finance team where

- The approval within the FSoD within the school has been obtained
- The finance team record each direct debit set up, listing payment details, dates & length, cost & coding details in the Direct Debit Register and record if invoices or VAT statements are provided
- VAT can only be reclaimed where the supplier supplies a VAT invoice or VAT Statement

The finance team must

- Reconcile direct debits regularly
- Be aware of direct debits due when calculating cashflow

When an invoice is received where payment is collected by direct debit it is entered into the accounting system as a cash book journal debit to the appropriate ledger and department codes and scanned into the system.

11.7 Internal Transactions

Inter-Trust transactions must be processed on internal ledger codes to ensure that income and expenditure for the organisation as a whole is not over-inflated in the year-end Financial Statements.

Requests for internal transfers where an exchange of services has taken place must be made on Internal Transfer Request Form – [Appendix 7](#)

11.8 Stock

Definition of stock: Goods or merchandise kept on the premises and available for sale. I.e. uniform, revision guides, stationery.

Valuation: Stock is valued at 'cost' not the re-sale price

Control of Stock: There should be a system for keeping account of stock levels to know how much stock is held at any given time. Regular stock counts should agree to your stock records and records of checks retained..

Year-end treatment of Stock: At year-end there will be an adjustment to reflect the amount of stock held as this needs to be shown in the financial statements.

Each school will advise the central team of its stock levels, the adjustment will be processed by the central team and it will result in a change to your I&E account (carry forward).

This is because stock purchased throughout the year will be debited to your I&E account at the time of purchase; at year-end, the value of stock remaining will be credited to your I&E code and debited to the Stock control account on your balance sheet (increasing/decreasing your carry forward depending upon the in-year movement in value).

12 Other Purchases

The Trust recognises that there are instances when it is not possible to process orders for goods and services in the normal way and items such as ingredients for cookery may have to be purchased from stores locally. Also purchasing goods and services over the internet which require payment at the time of ordering is becoming more common in practice. It is the function of the Corporate Multi Pay Cards Account to support these transactions.

12.1 Internet Purchases

It is expected that Internet Purchases will be an exception to the norm and should only be used where the goods or services cannot be effectively or economically obtained via traditional methods and where best value is being achieved.

The cost of postage and packing/returns must be taken into account, these are charged to the same budget the goods are being purchased from. Purchases must be made in the name of the setting, not an individual.

Checks should be made that purchases can be supported by VAT receipts. If they are not the costs including VAT should be used when carrying out VFM comparisons.

When making a request for an Internet order

- Manual Requisition Forms ([Appendix 8](#)) are required (unless the order is for catering food orders)
- On-line accounts must be in the name of the school and not the individual
- Billing should be via invoice where-ever possible
- Goods must be delivered to the school office address
- Internet Purchases are subject to the same VFM processes all other purchases
- Authorisation levels are the same as for any other purchase
- Purchasing must be from secure sites (those displaying “https” at the start and a padlock symbol) and should be from reputable sites
- The confirmation email or page displayed must be printed off and kept with the requisition.
- Goods must be checked and signed for in the same way as traditional procurement methods.
- Delivery notes must be attached to the requisition or the requisition signed as evidence of receipt.
- Where payment has been made by card, documentation must be retained and reconciled to the card holder’s statement.

The Trust does not accept purchases from Ebay and only permits purchase of electrical goods from Amazon by exception.

12.2 Reimbursements to staff

Purchases from an individual’s own funds should be the exception. Reimbursements relating to expenses will be reimbursed through the Trusts payroll system using the [the iTrent Employee Portal](#). Receipts will be required for all claims, including fuel.

Where a reimbursement to staff is required outside of the payroll system the following procedures apply:-

- Request for Reimbursement Form – [Appendix 10](#) must be completed and MUST be supported by receipts for the goods/services received.
- Reimbursements will be made directly to a bank account.
- Reimbursement may be refused if the School Business Manager considers maverick purchasing methods have been used, or the budget holder has already spent their full allocation and did not seek prior approval to exceed the funds available.
- The person being reimbursed signs to verify the bank details supplied.
- The reimbursement is recorded in the Accounting system as soon as possible the request & supporting invoices are scanned into the system.

13 Income

Income will be collected for a variety of purposes in each setting. Each school will have its own Charging and Remissions Policy. The detail below deals with the processes for dealing with income.

13.1 Accounting for ‘non-grant’ Income

Each Academy uses different systems to deal with the collection of non-grant income. Schools will be responsible for the set up and management of their income collection system(s) ensuring it meets robust audit requirements.

Responsibilities for Management of income Collection is outlined in the FSoD

All Income must be banked in full and processed through the ACCESS Accounting Software.

13.2 Receipt of On-Line Payments

The Trust wishes to collect the majority of its non-grant income through acceptance of online payments but recognises that not all schools have this functionality at present. It is considered that receipt of online payments achieves best value as the administrative burden is less over time.

Any online payment system must be linked to income collection software. The administration of the schools Online Payment system must be noted in the FSoD

On-line payments are

- Received directly into the Trust Bank Account
- Linked to income collection software where reports will inform the treatment for posting into the accounting system
- Posted into the accounting software using the detail which will match the income to the bank statement

13.3 Cash/Cheque Income collection

Cash and cheque transactions should be kept to a minimum. Where it is necessary to collect payments via cash a system which is understood by staff, pupils and parents must be in place in each school to ensure that cash and cheques handed in by pupils is received directly to the office each morning and can be reconciled to the pupils & purpose of the payment

- Cash/cheques received via pupils must be in an enveloped marked with the pupil's name, class/form group, and purpose.
- Envelopes must be stored securely until such time as they can be opened, counted and entered. Envelopes should be kept & discarded at the end of each week or when the banking has been done and balanced to the income collection system.
- Cash/cheques should be recorded in the income collection system that clearly defines the pupil, amount, purpose & method of payment
- Income recorded within income collection software with reportable functionality to the parent does not require any further receipting. Where receipts are required these can be issued from the income collection software
- If a duplicate receipt pad is used, receipts must be sequentially numbered. Bulk receipt entry e.g for dinner money can be used where income is being split out into a register for individual pupils, the receipt issued must balance to the amount entered in the register.
- Where donation money is collected through school fundraising events, cash should be handed to the office as soon as possible for secure storage, be counted as soon as possible and entered into Access.

13.4 Refund of income

From time to time it will be necessary to refund income.

If the income has not been banked it is permissible to refund it by returning the cash or cheque and voiding any receipt, noting the reason for the refund. A signature must always be obtained when refunding cash.

If the income has already been banked and entered onto the accounting system, it is preferable to issue the refunds via BACs. Details for BAC's refunds should be collected on the BACs Refund Request Form [Appendix 11](#). Cash or cheques should only be issued in exceptional circumstances.

Payments made via the schools on-line payments system must be refunded directly to the bank through the system of collection this is the preferred method of refunding payments.

The accounting entries for the refund of income should be posted to the original income ledger code.

13.5 Banking Cash & Cheques

Income must be banked in full and balanced against all receipts since the last bank run on a weekly basis. Every attempt must be made to investigate any differences. Overs or unders in cash must be notified to the School Business Manager. Overs in cash must be retained securely pending allocation if an error subsequently comes to light. Differences can be managed through posting to small differences & losses account through the SFO.

Banking must

- Be prepared & checked by two people at least weekly

- Be balanced to the reports extracted from income collection systems which clearly denotes the amount of cash and cheques collected during the period to be banked or the information recorded within the receipt books
- Have the particulars of any bank deposit entered on a paying in slip which should include the amount of the deposit , a Cheque listing if applicable
- Be posted to the ACCESS Accounting System using the Paying in Slip deposit number against the appropriate income ledger codes with the supporting reports scanned to the system.

The Counterfoil should include:

- The amount of the deposit
- The Collection Bag Reference Number if banking is being collected under contract
- Signature of person preparing the banking
- Signature of person checking the banking
- Receipt of collection attached

Banking of cheques only can be prepared as above and posted directly to Lloyds Banks, 10 Cross Street, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 1BE. Cash must never be sent through the post.

13.6 Lettings

Each setting will have its own policy for managing lettings which will be reviewed annually.

The financial administration for the collection of income from lettings should be controlled as per other income and income received banked in its entirety. Payments must be made in advance for these facilities whenever possible.

13.7 Custody

All cash and cheques must be kept secure. Where there is no safe available the cash held should not exceed £1,000. Where cash is held in a safe the amount held should not exceed £5,000. Where these amounts are exceeded arrangements to bank as soon as possible should be made.

Cheques should be banked at least fortnightly.

Cash should only be taken to the bank through the Trust's approved contract for cash collection.

13.8 Debtors

The Trusts payment terms are 30 days. All debts will be monitored at regular monthly intervals by the School Business Manager via an 'Aged Debtor Report' from the Accounting system, Debt reports within the schools income collection software or other manual records. As a minimum the reports will contain the following information:

- Debtors name
- Amount of debt
- Period of time debt outstanding

The SFO & CFO may periodically check debt reports at each setting.

13.9 Bad Debt Write-off

All debts, regardless of age should be attempted to be collected and will remain as a bad debt until written off.

The following debt recovery policy will be applied:

- If payment has not been received 30 days after invoice a reminder will be sent asking for payment within 7 days.

- If payment is not forthcoming, a further reminder will be sent, and a phone call requesting immediate payment
- If still no response a letter will be written and an instalment plan may be agreed where appropriate.
- If payment is still not forthcoming and after reference to the CFO, the school may, for debts over £500, issue a threat to put the matter into the hands of a nominated Solicitor if payment is not received within the next 7 days.
- If not received after 7 days, the nominated Solicitor may be asked to pursue the debt and the debtor will be notified accordingly.
- Debts of £500 and less will be pursued without reference to the nominated Solicitor and will be reported to the LGB where governors will decide on action to be taken which may include legal recourse or write off that.

A register of debts written off must be kept by each setting Appendix 9.

Debts under £100 which the school deems to be uncollectable may be written off by the Head Teacher.

Debts between £100 and £500 may be written off only with the approval of the LGB after it has satisfied itself that all reasonable efforts have been made to recover it.

Debts between £500 and £750 may be written off by the CFO at the request of the LGB and will be reported to the BoT retrospectively.

Debts in excess of £750 can only be written off at the discretion of the BoT.
The limits above will equally apply to cumulative debts for the same debtor within the financial year.

The prevailing Academies Financial Handbook will specify the level at which bad debt write offs must be authorised by the ESFA.

14. Cash Management

14.1 Bankers

The Trust have appointed Lloyds Bank as their bankers for **all** funds. The opening of all bank accounts must be authorised by the BoT who must set out in the FSoD the arrangements covering the operation of all accounts. This should include any transfers between accounts, signing arrangements and the operation of systems such online banking and BACS which must also be subject to the same level of control.

14.2 Payments and withdrawals

All cheques and other instruments authorising withdrawal from any of the Academy's bank accounts must bear signatures / electronic signatures in line with the scheme of delegation.

14.3 Bank Reconciliations

The SFO must ensure bank statements are received regularly and that reconciliations are performed at least on a monthly basis. Reconciliation procedures will ensure:

- All Bank Accounts are reconciled to the accounting system
- Adjustments are dealt with promptly.

14.4 Petty Cash Accounts

The Trust does not run petty cash accounts. Where cash transactions need to take place (outside of section 13.4 of the policy) the school must contact the central team.

14.5 Multi Pay Cards

Multi Pay cards are issued to personnel under the FSoD for the purposes paying for goods and services when the normal ordering processes are not possible. The procurement of goods and services through the use of Multi Pay Cards should be kept to a minimum and should not replace the normal arrangements for ordering goods and services as detailed in Section 11 of this policy.

Limits on Multi Pay cards will be kept under review by the central administration team.

Cards will be issued with the name of the Trust and the individual to whom the card is allocated.

Multi Pay Card Holders will

- Ensure the card is held securely
- Ensure PIN numbers are not disclosed to any other persons
- Ensure receipts are provided for every transaction noted with the purpose & cost centre
- Report any instances of suspected unauthorised card use to the SBM & the CFO
- Use the card only for the purposes of school business
- Have goods delivered only to a school address unless there is prior approval for an exceptional circumstance
- Ensure the billing address is that of the school and not the individual
- Ensure the card is not used to purchase alcohol
- Ensure internet purchases are made in line with section 12.1 of this policy
- Report the loss of the card or PIN details immediately to the bank.
- Not reconcile card statements issued in their own name

The School Finance Team will

- Reconcile all card statements to the receipts provided and investigate any discrepancies
- Ensure separation of duties and NOT reconcile statements where they are the named card holder
- Report to the SFO any instances of missing receipts for expenditure
- Alert either the SBM, Head Teacher or Central Team where any of the above card holder conditions are not met
- Enter the card statement on to the accounting system within 5 days of receipt scanning the information to the system
- Have the reconciled Card statements signed off by the Head Teacher or SBM, or where the Head Teacher is the named individual, the Chair of Governors.
- Retain the statements and supporting receipts for inspection by audit.

Missing receipts or suspected misuse of the card must be reported and could lead to the removal of the privilege of holding a card.

14.6 Currency Cards

Currency Cards are issued and managed through Caxton FX. They are for the purposes of managing residential activities to minimise the risks associated with carrying cash and to allow the ability to manage unforeseen events. The card(s) will be pre-loaded with an agreed amount of currency prior to the activity taking place. Cards will be issued in the name of Tarka Learning Partnership and given a trip number. The card can be issued to different trip leaders using the pro-forma in [Appendix 15](#). Cards will be 'blocked' when not signed out for use and a new PIN will be ordered for each card for each trip.

The Central Team Will

- Manage the Caxton FX currency accounts using the online system
- Ensure funds are pre-loaded in accordance with school requests
- Ensure all trip cards are 'blocked' when not signed out for a trip
- Ensure new PINs are requested upon notification of a card issue
- Supply the school with the detail of the transactions after the trip has completed

The School Will

- Hold all trip cards securely in the school safe between use
- Advise the Central Team at least 10 days in advance of a residential of the card(s) being issued, the currency and amount required on the card using appendix 15
- Provide a copy of the trip costing sheet to the central team
- Check the number of receipts and total declared spend agree upon signing the card back in
- Check the detailed transaction list against the receipts and enter into the finance system

- Follow up any discrepancies with the card holder and where necessary the central team.

Currency Card Holders will

- Sign for the currency card and new PIN when it is issued for a trip
- Ensure cards are held securely whilst in their possession
- Ensure PIN numbers are not disclosed to any other persons
- Ensure receipts are retained for every transaction and returned with the card at the end of the trip
- Where it has not been possible to obtain a receipt make a declaration of unreceipted spend upon return of the card
- Report any instances of suspected unauthorised use of the card to the SBM
- Use the card only for the purposes of supporting the trip
- Report the loss of the card or PIN to the Trust Central Team immediately or if they are not available, the bank
- Return the card with any receipts to the SBM on the nearest working day following the end of the trip.

14.7 Clients / Pre Payment Accounts

Schools may allow the facility for parents to have a General Pre-Payment Account available to all parents through their income collection system in order to allow parents to budget for future trips or activities that their child may be invited to take part in during their time at the school.

Monies held on a pre-payment account

- Can only be used for the purposes authorised by the account holder
- Are accounted for separately to all other funds of the academy in the income collection system and Accounting system
- Regularly reviewed to ensure transfers from the pre-payment accounts in the income collection system are also processed in the Accounting system
- Are reconciled at least monthly between the Income Collection System balance and the Client pre-pay ledger code in the Accounting system and the reports signed and retained
- Are refunded to the parent or transferred to a sibling when a child leaves the school
- Is treated as deferred income for accounting purposes

14.8 Unofficial School Funds

The Trust does not permit the use of unofficial school funds. All income and expenditure MUST be recorded through the Trusts financial accounting software.

14.9 Borrowing and Leases

The Trust must seek the ESFA's approval before borrowing, including finance leases and overdraft facilities.

Schools must seek permission from the CFO before entering into any type of lease arrangement/ borrowing arrangement.

The CFO will keep a register of leases for the Auditors and report to the BoT. The Register will include

- date of agreement
- who the agreement is with
- the payment schedule
- equipment leased or purchased
- end date
- school the agreement relates to
- if a VAT statement is provided
- payment method

14.10 Cash Flow Forecasts

The CFO is responsible for preparing cash flow forecasts to ensure that the Trust has sufficient funds available to cover day-to-day operations. If significant balances can be foreseen, steps should be taken to invest the extra funds.

15 Investment Policy

The Trust aims to manage its cash balances to provide for the day-to-day working capital requirements of its operations, whilst protecting the real long-term value of any surplus cash balances against inflation. In addition, the academy aims to invest surplus cash funds to optimise returns, but ensuring the investment instruments are such that there is no risk to the loss of these cash funds.

Our aim is to spend the public monies with which we are entrusted for the direct education benefit of students as soon as is prudent. The trust does not consider the investment of surplus funds as a primary activity, rather it is the result of good stewardship as and when circumstances allow.

The CFO is responsible for managing the investment of Trust funds.

15.1 Purpose of investment

- To ensure adequate cash balances are maintained in the current account to cover day-to-day working capital requirements
- To ensure there is no risk of loss in the capital value of any cash funds invested
- To protect the capital value of any invested funds against inflation
- To optimise returns on invested funds

15.2 Investment Guidelines

- Cash flows are to be prepared and monitored to ensure there are adequate liquid funds to meet all payroll related commitments and outstanding supply creditors that are due for payment.
- Where the cash flow identifies a base level of cash funds that will be surplus to requirements these may be invested in an interest bearing account in a UK regulated bank.
- Where the surplus is deemed to be significant and long-term, funds may be invested in Treasury deposits, with maturity dates which do not result in the cash funds being unavailable for longer than 12 weeks upon agreement of the BoT.

16 Balances and Reserves

The Academies will manage their budgets in line with the Trust's Balances and Reserve Policy.

17. VAT and other taxes

The Trust will ensure it conducts its business in line with HMRC guidance over its tax affairs

17.1 VAT Registration

The Trust is registered for VAT. The VAT number is: 323 6686 90

17.2 VAT

Each individual Academy is responsible for complying with HMRC regulations on the treatment of VAT and advice should be sought where uncertainty exists.

Any penalties imposed will be charged directly to the establishment in breach of the regulations or failing to comply.

Staff are not permitted to make purchases for themselves through the school system in order to avoid the payment of VAT.

VAT can only be reclaimed when supported by a VAT invoice/receipt.

VAT must be charged on goods and services supplied by the in line with guidance in Appendix 14

There is no VAT on transactions between settings within the Trust,

17.3 VAT Claim

VAT claims will be made in accordance with HMRC guidance. The CFO is responsible for ensuring this is carried out

Guidance on VAT can be found at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/vat/start/introduction.htm>

17.4 Charities and Corporation Tax

Limited companies and unincorporated organisations are liable for Corporation Tax on their profits from trading activities as defined by HMRC <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trustees-trading-and-tax-how-charities-may-lawfully-trade-cc35/trustees-trading-and-tax-how-charities-may-lawfully-trade#trading-by-charities>

As the Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, the Trust will follow the guidance issued by HMRC on tax exemptions for charities and seek advice from its accountants as to minimising its exposure to risk.

18. Asset Control and Accounting Policy

The Trust uses Parago Asset Management Software to manage assets, both owned and leased, across its settings. The management of assets ensures they are appropriately maintained and deployed, evidenced for insurance purposes, protected from theft, and enables planning for replacement.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure assets are being managed in accordance with this policy.

Systems must be in place within each setting to ensure that assets received (including mechanical and fixed plant) are recorded on the system and security marked prior to the asset being brought into use within the school. The Asset Register is used to record all capitalised and non-capitalised assets and forms the asset inventory.

18.1 Asset categorisation and depreciation treatment

All assets will be categorised according to their accounting treatment. Thresholds have been applied to each category over which the Trust will capitalise expenditure for assets.

The capitalisation threshold is applied on a per-transaction basis, therefore any asset purchased within a transaction of less than £5,000 will be recorded in the asset register but have the capitalisation marker applied; where-as assets that are singularly or collectively purchased in a transaction over the value of £5,000 will have the capitalisation marker applied to them

Asset Group	Criteria	Capitalisation Threshold	Depreciation Method
Leased	All assets under a lease agreement	NA	NA
Buildings	Additions and Replacements	£5,000	50 year SLM
Leased Land	Land transferred on 125 year lease	£5,000	125 year SLM
Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	Furniture, equipment (non IT) and plant owned by the school	£5,000	5 year SLM
Computer Equipment	All IT equipment owned by school (PC's, laptops, projectors, whiteboards, wireless networks etc)	£5,000	3 year SLM

Intangible Assets	Purchase of software licences that extend beyond 1 year i.e. owned & installed software	£5,000	3 year SLM
Motor Vehicles	Motor vehicles that are owned by the Trust.	All	25% RBM
Assets Under Construction	These are not depreciated until the asset is brought into use.		

18.2 Asset Register

All assets over the value of £250 will be security marked and recorded within the Parago software within one of the categories listed in 18.1.

Desirable/moveable objects under £250 may be recorded at the discretion of the individual setting.

All entries that meet capitalisation limits will have purchase details recorded in the entry

Items on the register should be checked annually and reported upon

Discrepancies between the physical count and the registers will be investigated promptly and any discrepancies over the value of £500 reported to the LGB.

18.3 Security Marking

Assets received (including mechanical and fixed plant) must be recorded on the system and security tagged prior to the asset being brought into use.

Where it is not possible or practical to asset tag an item that is being recorded in the system, such as capitalised building work, class set of tables, these are recorded as book entries.

18.4 Assets Excluded from the Asset Register

Current Assets and Stock are excluded from the Asset Register. Current assets include cash & bank balances which are controlled through reconciliation to control accounts. Stock include items such as uniform and stationery which must be monitored separately through Stock taking.

Where the value of stock held is deemed to be material, these will be reported in the Financial Statements.

18.5 Loan of Assets/ Assets taken off-site

Items should not be removed from the premises without the appropriate delegated authority. Items loaned or taken off the premises should only be used in connection with conducting school/trust business. A record of any loan should be recorded through the Parago Software with documentation showing the item as being signed for by the member of staff.

18.6 Accounting for Fixed Assets

The appropriate accounting transactions will be processed for all assets capitalised at year end and will appear on the company balance sheet.

18.7 Depreciation

Assets meeting the capitalisation thresholds will be depreciated to reflect the recoverable amount in the financial statements over the useful life of the asset.

Depreciation will be calculated monthly in the Parago system as per the asset category in 18.1 and posted annually to the Accounting System.

18.8 Assets brought in and Gifted Assets

Assets brought in on conversion will be valued at 'Fair Value' and subject to the same depreciation processes as detailed above. Donated and gifted items will be brought in at their current value and evidence should be obtained where possible to support the valuation given.

18.9 Asset Disposal/Sale

The best possible value must be obtained from the disposal of an asset. The Trust considers that best value is achieved when the asset is used to the fullest extent of its economic life, which may extend beyond the number of depreciation years defined in 18.1 above.

Assets that are fully depreciated and are deemed beyond economic repair should be noted as such in the register upon disposal and the appropriate disposal method followed.

There may be occasions when an asset no longer serves a purpose for the school. The LGB has the authority to declare equipment, furniture or other assets or stock, surplus to requirements and to make arrangements for their sale or write off.

An Asset Disposal Form – [Appendix 12](#) should be used for **all** IT assets and other assets with a residual value of more than £500. Disposal of assets with a residual value of more than £2,000 should be referred to the CFO and for of £5,000 to the BoT.

Before seeking to sell an asset the school should first make reasonable attempts offer this equipment at net book value cost to other schools within the Trust. [Where no NBV is attached to the item a sale value which reflects the estimated original purchase price divided by the age of the equipment is appropriate]

The disposal of equipment to staff is not encouraged as it may become more difficult to evidence VFM in any sale or disposal.

Settings must ensure that data and hardware is cleared of sensitive data prior to sale/disposal.

The resale of computer equipment does not include licenced software

Disposal of equipment is within Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) legislation – collection certificates should be scanned and kept on file.

18.10 Disposal of items purchased by Capital Grant

Under the Funding Agreement the approval of the Secretary of State is required before the sale, or disposal by other means, or reinvestment of proceeds from the disposal, of an asset (or group of assets) for which a Capital Grant in excess of £20,000 was originally paid.

The Academy agrees to reinvest the proceeds from all asset sales for which capital grant was received.

If proceeds are not reinvested the Trust will repay to the DfE the same proportion of the proceeds of the sale or disposal as equates with the proportion of the original cost met by the Secretary of State (i.e. if Secretary of State purchased 50% of the original cost of the asset then the Academy agrees to reimburse with 50% of the proceeds.) The proceeds from the sale of assets acquired with grant from the Secretary of State cannot be used as the Academy's contribution to further named grant aided projects or purchases

19. Key Inventory

The Key/Fob inventory, including safe keys, should be maintained by the person nominated in the FSoD. The inventory will record areas of access granted to each key or fob holder and will be kept up to date at all times.

It is the responsibility of staff to report all lost or stolen keys to enable new security ensures to be put in place and for the inventory to be updated.

It is not permissible to have keys cut without the express permission of the nominated person.

20 Insurance

All schools within the Trust are members of the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangement scheme. (RPA).

RPA membership rules can be accessed via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/risk-protection-arrangement-rpa-for-academy-trusts-membership-rules>

The RPA scheme does not cover

- Motor Vehicles
- Works of Art
- Engineering and Inspection
- Business Trips abroad

Insurances to cover these areas are purchased by each school separately through Zurich.

Insurances for other purposes such as staff absence are at the discretion of each school.

The schools current Employers Liability Insurance Certificate must be displayed within the school office.

21 Risk Management

The Trust has a separate Risk Management Policy and Register.

22 Fraud

No precise legal definition of fraud exists but many of the offences referred to as fraud are covered by the Theft Acts of 1968 and 1978. The term is used to describe such acts as deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, corruption, theft, conspiracy, embezzlement, misappropriation, false representation, concealment of material facts and collusion. It applies to all areas of the Trust's business and activities.

22.1 Minimising the risk of Fraud

The processes laid down in this manual are designed to minimise the risk of Fraud and all staff, Trustees and governors are bound by these policies and procedures.

22.2 Reporting of Fraud

If you become aware of a suspected fraud or irregularity, you should write down your concerns immediately. Make a note of all relevant details, such as what was said on the telephone or during other conversations, the date, the time and the names of anyone involved. Report the matter immediately to the CFO, or in the absence of the CFO or where the CFO is not the appropriate person, the CEO.

When you report your concerns you must be prepared to hand over any notes or evidence you have already gathered. Confidentiality is of paramount importance throughout the process.

Any reporting of fraud will be treated in accordance with the Trust's Whistle-Blowing Policy. All matters will be dealt with in confidence and in strict accordance with the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects the legitimate personal interests of staff.

An individual may choose to report concerns anonymously and such anonymity will be respected. It should be noted that if the report suggested criminal activity and the case is referred to the police, the identity of the person reporting the details will be needed at a later date if criminal proceedings are to be pursued effectively. Identification is preferred and will assist the investigation.

You must not do any of the following:

- contact the suspected perpetrator in an effort to determine the facts and demand answers
- discuss the case facts, suspicions or allegations with anyone other than the CFO or other authorised officials during the investigation process.
- attempt to personally conduct an investigation of your own.

22.3 Persons Responsible for the Investigation of Fraud

The CFO will be responsible for the investigation of any allegation of fraud as laid down in the Fraud Response and Investigation Plan unless they themselves are the subject of any allegation when a suitably qualified person will be appointed.

22.4 Fraud Response & Investigation

Initial Response

- Any reported instances of Fraud should be reported to the CFO, Chair of Trustees the CEO and the Head Teacher of the school unless one of them is the implicated party.
- The CFO will call a meeting of the Audit Committee at the first available opportunity, ideally within 24 hours of the suspected fraud being reported. Where members of Audit Committee are not available, suitable alternatives can be appointed by the Committee.
- The Audit Committee will consider the report of suspected fraud and decide:
 - whether to instigate an investigation to establish the facts of what has taken place
 - whether to recommend to the CFO / Head Teacher that the matter is reported to the police
 - whether to recommend to the CFO / Head Teacher to suspend the individual(s) suspected pending further investigation.

Where further evidence is required before deciding whether to instigate an investigation, the Audit Committee will commission the gathering of further evidence and reconsider the position in order to make a decision.

Suspension pending investigation

- The Audit Committee will consider whether to make a recommendation to the CEO & Head Teacher to suspend the individual(s) suspected pending further investigation. The prime consideration in this respect is to prevent further loss and/or the destruction or removal of evidence.
- Where an individual is to be suspended they should be approached unannounced and asked to attend a meeting, where the suspension is confirmed and explained. Wherever possible, they should be given the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague.
- If it is not possible for them to be accompanied, the meeting may proceed nonetheless so that action can be taken to prevent further loss and/or the destruction or removal of evidence. Following suspension, the individual(s) will be supervised at all times before leaving the premises. Only personal property may be removed and all keys must be surrendered. The Network Manager will be informed and access to School IT systems denied immediately. The individual will be sent confirmation of the suspension, in writing.
- Suspension pending investigation of suspected fraud does not imply that it has been established that fraud has taken place and does not represent disciplinary action. Members of staff will remain on full pay during the period of suspension.

Investigation of suspected fraud

- The Audit Committee will normally commission an internal investigation of the suspected fraud, but will have authority to appoint other experts to conduct the investigation where necessary.
- The academy, its employees and Governors will make available to the investigator all such information and records as are necessary to pursue the investigation.
- The matters investigated will be kept confidential in so far as this does not hinder or frustrate the investigation process.
- The investigator will prepare a report setting out their findings from the investigation. The report will cover:
 - an opinion on whether a fraud has been committed and the reasons and summary evidence in support of the opinion
 - where the opinion is that a fraud has been committed, description of the fraud, value of loss, people involved and the means by which the fraud was perpetrated
 - measures already taken or to be taken to prevent recurrence
 - any recommendations for action to strengthen future responses to fraud.
- The Audit Committee will consider the report and determine whether it demonstrates that a fraud has been committed and who may be responsible. In the light of their conclusions, the Audit Committee will decide the action to be taken, as follows:
 - if it is determined on the basis of the evidence that no fraud has taken place, the Audit Committee will agree action to ensure that all relevant parties are informed. If any individual(s) have been suspended pending investigation, the HR Advisor will be responsible for advising on action relating to the lifting of the suspension in the case of staff.
 - if it is determined on the basis of the evidence that a fraud has taken place, the Audit Committee will refer to the Disciplinary Procedure in the case of staff. The Audit Committee will also agree any

action necessary under the Trust's requirements for reporting to external Bodies such as the ESFA and Charity Commission.

- The Audit Committee may recommend to the CEO that the matter is reported to the police if this has not happened at an earlier stage and/or that civil action is taken to recover losses.
- If the report recommends improvements to the academy's control systems, the CFO will ensure that these are implemented at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the matter is referred to staff disciplinary procedures, a separate investigation under those procedures will be necessary and evidence from the Audit Committee's investigation will form part of the disciplinary investigation.

22.5. Recovery of losses

The Audit Committee will assess the opportunity for recovering any losses, including taking legal action through the Courts, where appropriate. The CFO will be responsible for ensuring that any legal action is pursued, the Head Teacher of the school will be responsible for supporting this action.

23 Anti Bribery

It is the Trust's policy to conduct all of its business in an honest and ethical manner. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships.

23.1 Bribery

A bribe is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to gain any business or personal advantage. A bribe may be offered to any individuals working for the Trust at all levels (whether permanent, fixed-term or temporary), and includes members, trustees, governors, volunteers, agents or any other person associated with the Trust (collectively referred to as 'workers' in this policy).

23.2 Gifts and Hospitality

This policy does not prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality (given and received) to or from third parties. The giving or receipt of gifts or hospitality is not prohibited, if the following requirements are met:

What is Acceptable?

- it is not made with the intention of influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or a business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or a business advantage, or in explicit or implicit exchange for favours or benefits;
- it complies with local law;
- it is given in the Academy's name, not in your name;
- it does not include cash or a cash equivalent (such as gift certificates or vouchers);
- it is appropriate in the circumstances. For example, in the UK it is customary for small gifts to be given at Christmas time;
- taking into account the reason for the gift, it is of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time;
- it is given openly, not secretly;
- gifts should not be offered to, or accepted from, government officials or representatives without the prior approval of the CFO or the Head.

The practice of giving business gifts varies between countries and regions and what may be normal and acceptable in one region may not be in another. The test to be applied is whether in all the circumstances the gift or hospitality is reasonable and justifiable. The intention behind the gift should always be considered.

What is Not Acceptable?

It is not acceptable for workers (or someone on their behalf) to:

- give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality with the expectation or hope that an advantage for Trust /Academy will be received, or to reward an advantage already received;

- give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to "facilitate" or expedite a routine procedure;
- accept payment from a third party that they know or suspect is offered with the expectation that it will obtain an advantage for them;
- accept a gift or hospitality from a third party if they know or suspect that it is offered or provided with an expectation that a business advantage will be provided by the Academy in return;
- threaten or retaliate against another worker who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy, or engage in any activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

23.3 Donations

An Academy

/ Trust will only make charitable donations that are legal and ethical under local laws and practices. No donation must be offered or made in the Academy / Trust's name or on behalf of the Academy/ Trust without the prior approval of the CFO or the Head Teacher.

23.4 Workers' Responsibilities

Workers must ensure that they read, understand and comply with this policy. The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. All workers are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy. A worker must notify the CFO or the Head as soon as possible if he/she believes or suspects that a breach of this policy has occurred, or may occur in the future.

Any employee who breaches this policy will face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct. We reserve our right to terminate our contractual relationship with other workers if they breach this policy.

23.5 Record-keeping

The Academy / Trust keeps financial records and has appropriate internal controls in place which will evidence the business reason for making payments to third parties. All Employees must make the Head Teacher or SBM aware of all hospitality or gifts accepted or offered over the value of £25. These will be recorded on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality - [Appendix 13](#) which will be subject to managerial review. Workers must ensure all expenses claims relating to hospitality, gifts or expenses incurred to third parties are submitted in accordance with the Trust's expenses policy and specifically record the reason for the expenditure.

All accounts, invoices, memoranda and other documents and records relating to dealings with third parties, such as clients, suppliers and business contacts, should be prepared and maintained with strict accuracy and completeness. No accounts must be kept "off-book" to facilitate or conceal improper payments.

23.6 How to Raise a Concern

Workers are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of malpractice at the earliest possible stage. Concerns should be reported by following the procedure set out in our Whistle-blowing Policy.

24. Statutory Reporting

The Trust is required to submit returns in the following areas

- DfE - Annual Accounts Return (AAR)
- NCTL - Annual Grant Return for ITT
- EFSA – Financial Statements
- ESFA – Budget Forecast Return
- ESFA – Budget Forecast Return (Outturn)
- ESFA – Land & Building Collection Tool
- TPS - Teachers Pension Return
- LGPS – LGPS Annual Return

The central team will prepare these returns with assistance from the Academy's appointed accountants where required. Evidence of meeting the requirements of grant funding will be required from the setting managing the spend for each grant.

24.1 Financial Statements

As a Charitable company the Academy must comply with company law as set out in the Companies Act 1985. This includes a requirement to prepare a governors' report and financial statement ('annual accounts') and for these to be independently audited by a registered auditor. Financial Statements will be prepared to **31st August each year**. They will include:

- Incoming resources from all sources receivable in the period
- Resources expended on all activities within the period
- All assets and liabilities of the Academy at the balance sheet date
- All cash received and expended within the period
- Notes to the accounts
- Governance statement and report

24.2 End of Year Financial Schedules & Year End Planning

End of Year Financial Schedules are used to ensure that full and comprehensive information is gathered to inform the preparation of the financial statements. As a minimum these will include:

- Creditor – Where an invoice dated prior to 31st August has been received for goods and services but not paid by this date. Accruals – Where goods and services have been received but the invoice has not yet been received or is dated 1st September or after
- Debtor – For goods and services provided and invoiced before 31st August where the invoice has not been settled
- Accrued Income – where goods or services have been provided but the invoice has not been raised
- Payments in advance – Payment has been made prior to 31st August for goods and services which will be received after 1st September (for which the academy could reasonably expect a refund if activities ceased e.g. rent in advance)
- Deferred income – Income received by 31st August for goods or services to be provided after 1st September e.g. lettings, trips
- Breakdown of spend against certain income streams
- Information to support Governance Statements – as required

These will be sent out to schools together with the timetable for end of year processes in July each year.

The Annual accounts must be submitted to the EFA by **31st December** and to Companies House by no later than **30th June** (10 months after the end of the accounting year),.

25. External Auditors

The Trust has appointed Bishop Fleming as their external auditors. This will be reviewed on a 5-yearly basis. The appointment of Auditors must be approved by the Members.

26 Document Storage

It is expected that as much financial information will be scanned and stored within the Finance System as is reasonably practical.

Documents can be filed and retained in such a way as to aid easy retrieval.

Financial records must be kept securely and retained for 6 years + current year for VAT purposes.

27 Transactions Requiring the Approval of the ESFA

The Trust will operate within the Delegated Limits of Authority as detailed in the Academies Financial Handbook. The express approval of the ESFA is required for the following transactions

Event	Limit	Reference
Novel, contentious & repercussive transactions	£0 all to be reported	AFH 5.44
Staff severance	£50,000	AFH 5.7 -5.11
Compensation	£50,000	AFH 5.14 -5.16
Ex-Gratia	£0	AFH 5.17-5.18
Write offs / liabilities such as letters of comfort	The smaller of £1% annual t/o or £45,000	AFH 5.19-5.222
Acquisition or disposal of freehold land & buildings	All	AFH 5.23-5.23
Disposal of heritage assets	All	AFH 5.24
Entering into finance lease or any form of borrowing	All	AFH 5.24 – 5.27 AFH 5.33 – 5.34
Entering into a leasehold or tenancy agreement on land & building for more than 7 years	All	AFH 5.25 5.28
Granting a lease or tenancy agreement of any duration on land & buildings to another party	All	AFH 5.25 – 5.28
Related Party Transactions	Contract/series of contracts exceeding £20,000	AFH 5.41-5.43

Acronyms'

BoT – Board of Trustees
 CEO – Chief Executive Officer
 CFO – Chief Finance Officer
 DfE –Department for Education
 ESFA – Education & Skills Funding Agency
 FSoD – Finance Scheme of Delegate
 LGB – Local Governing Body
 RPA – Risk Protection Scheme
 SFO – Senior Finance Officer
 TLP – Tarka Learning Partnership
 VFM – Value for Money

Appendix 1. Local Finance Scheme of Delegation

School Name		4-digit code	
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**Authorising orders for goods and services, authorising payments, entering into contracts
Authorisation of Virements**

Position	Name/Source	Limit/Restriction
Board of Trustees	Minutes	Over £50,000 – decision recorded in minutes
Governing Body	Minutes	Up to £50,000 – decision recorded in minutes
Governor c'ttee? <i>Delete if NA</i>		
<i>These levels are defaults in the system. They can be changed to a lower amount at school level if required. If so, note amounts below.</i>		
Head Teacher		£15,000
School Business Manager		£5,000
Finance Officer		£2,000

Managing the Trust Bank Accounts [central team only]

Position	Name	Authority
CEO	Andy Cotton	Signatory one of two
Chief Finance Officer	Mo Cann	Signatory one of two
Senior Finance Administrator	Nikki Rostock	Signatory one of two
HR Officer	Jo Down	Signatory one of two

Users of computerised ACCESS Software. Add rows if there are more than 1 person in this category

Position	Name	Accounting	Profile	Budget Planning	User Type
Chief Finance Officer	Mo Cann	Y	All	Y	Master
Senior Finance Officer	Nikki Rostock	Y	All	Y	Master
Head Teacher		Y	HT	N	Full
School Business Manager		Y	SBM	Y	Full
Finance Officer		Y			
Finance Assistant		Y	F A	N	Full
Budget Holders	List held by SBM	Y	BH	N	Full
Requisitions	List held by SBM	Y	Req	N	Full

Users of computerised income collection Software – if applicable. If more than one system in use copy and add another section.

Name of Software	Position	Name	Limit/Restriction
	School Business Manager		System Administrator
	Finance Administrator		System Administrator
	Receptionist		System user – access all modules
	Administrator –Pupil Data		System user – access all modules
	Clerical Assistant		System user – access all modules
	Technician		System user – access all modules

Certification payroll documents		
Position	Name	Limit/Restriction
Chair of Governors		Sign payroll forms relating to Head Teacher
Head Teacher		Sign all Appointment & Leaver Forms and change of contract forms
School Business Manager		Sign Supply Starter Declarations Sign off Monthly Claim documents
Finance Administrator		Preparation of Monthly Claim documents

Certificate of Travel / Subsistence Claims		
Position	Name	Limit/Restriction
School Business Manager		Up to £200 per claim
Head Teacher		Over £200 per claim & all SBM claims
Chair of Governors		Travel Claims of Head Teacher

Authorisation to write-off bad debts		
Position	Name	Limit/ Restriction
Board of Trustees	Minutes	Over £751
CFO	Mo Cann	£501 - £750
LGB	Minutes	£101 to £500
Head Teacher		Up to £100
School Business Manager		Up to £25

Administration of Petty Cash – Not currently in use		
Position	Name	Limit/ Restriction
School Business Manager		£400
Petty Cash Holder		£50
<i>Add further Petty Cash Holders as required</i>		

Authorisation of expense reimbursement vouchers		
Position	Name	Limit/ Restriction
In the case of the Head Teacher or over £400 authorisation is by Trust central team		
Head Teacher		Over £401
School Business Manager		£400
Finance Assistant		£50

Opening of Tenders [One must be a school leader]		
Position	Name	Limit/ Restriction
Head Teacher <i>[May delegate in writing to another School Leader]</i>		One of two
School Business Manager		One of two
<i>May be delegated by the above to an agency employed to run the tender process</i>		

Evaluation of Tenders for use by decision makers at appropriate delegated levels		
Position	Name	Limit/ Restriction
Trust Staff	Mo Cann	One of Two
Head Teacher		One of two
School Business Manager		One of two
<i>In some instances it will be necessary to involve another appropriate member of staff i.e Premises Manager, Kitchen Manager or IT Network Manager in order to ensure the evaluation process take into account the view of the immediate service area.</i>		

Specimen Signature list.

Please ensure staff included in the Local Scheme of Delegation are included in the specimen signature list.
Upon completion/amendment scan & email to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk

Staff Name	Position	Signature	Date added	Date removed	Initial

Appendix 3. Declaration of Interests

Tarka Learning Partnership YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Name:	
Address:	
Job Title:	

Please list out your related party relationships within the table below. Please summarise any transactions with the Trust during the period or confirm that there have been none in the period.

Related Parties: Name of entity:	Summary of Transactions during the period or confirm if none:
Other directorships:	
Trusteeships:	
Shareholdings:	
Other interests:	

Please list out your close family, as defined in Appendix 2, and their relationship to you. Please summarise their related party relationships (or confirm that there are none) within the table below. Please summarise any transactions between the related party and/or their interests with the Trust during the period; or confirm that there have been none in the period.

Close family: Name:	Nature of relationship:	Interests:	Transactions:
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Notes:

- This form will be held securely. It will only be seen by the directors, members of the finance department and external audit staff.
- If there are no entries to be made in a table, please mark “none to all” on the first row.
- If any of the information in this form is unknown or uncertain, please indicate this, and give an indication of when the information will be made available or will have been verified at the audit date so that the audit team can follow up on this.
- If you have any queries in completing this form, please contact the audit team.

I confirm that the above is a complete and accurate record of my business and related interests for the year ended 31 August 2020.

These details have been provided in order to assist in the compilation of the related party transaction disclosures in the year end statutory accounts. Where there have been no material transactions with any of my business interests, no disclosure is required.

I will make [Tarka Learning Partnership](#) aware of any changes with regard to the above.

.....
Signed

.....
Date

Appendix 4. Statement of Assurance

This form is for completion by an individual or organisation (the 'supplier'), defined in the [Academies Financial Handbook](#) as a 'connected party' to an academy trust. Individuals and organisations supplying goods or services to a connected trust must charge no more than cost (defined at the end of the form). This form will also help trusts comply with their funding agreement obligations.

Section 1. Suppliers Details

Name and address of supplier	
Company number (if applicable)	
Start date	
End date	
Estimate of commercial price, including profit	<i>A reasonable and fair estimate</i>
Connection with trust, e.g. director is also a director/trustee of the supplier of goods and services	<i>Explain the nature of the connection between the supplier and academy trust</i>
Value of goods or services to trust	<i>£ At cost without profit</i>
Does this value include direct costs and indirect costs only?	Yes / No
Nature of contract	<i>Such as building supplies or professional services</i>

Section 2: Details of contract

Explanation of how the supplier is charging the academy trust
<i>This should include a sufficiently detailed explanation setting out that the supplier understands its direct and indirect costs in such a way to demonstrate to the academy trust that it is supplying goods and services at cost, without any element of profit.</i>
<i>[Please extend the rows below if the contract is longer than three years]</i>

	Direct costs	Indirect costs	Total
Year 1	£	£	£
Year 2	£	£	£
Year 3	£	£	£
Total	£	£	£

Section 3: Supplier certification

Certification of supplier
I certify, on behalf of [<i>name of supplier</i>] that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the goods and services detailed in this form will be supplied to the academy trust on the basis of direct cost plus indirect costs, with no element of profit;

Certification of supplier	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are supplying the goods and services on an open book basis and we will provide more information on request; and we will make an adjustment in the following year if we identify a miscalculation on our direct or indirect costs, and supplied goods or services which included an element of profit. 	

Name and position	<i>Should be sufficiently senior to sign this declaration</i>
Date	
Signature	

Section 4: Academy signoff

Certification of academy trust	
<p>In signing this document I am satisfied that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the goods and services being supplied comply with the requirements on trading with connected parties as set out in the handbook, and represent value for money; there is full compliance with the trust's scheme of delegation; open and fair procurement and compliance with the trust's procurement procedures have taken place; potential conflicts of interest within the academy trust have been robustly managed; the trust's register of interest captures relevant business and pecuniary interests as set out in the handbook, and will be updated to reflect this contract (if not already); the supplier understands that open book arrangements are in place and they will provide more information on request, if needed; and both the trust's accounting officer and chair of board of Trustees have agreed to trade with this connected supplier, and that the measures and safeguards listed above are in place. 	

Name and position (in academy trust)	<i>Person signing must be sufficiently senior within the academy trust</i>
Date	
Signature	

<p>Notes</p> <p>Direct costs means the costs of any materials and labour used directly in producing the goods or services.</p> <p>Indirect costs means a proportionate and reasonable share of fixed and variable overheads.</p> <p>At cost means without profit as it includes direct and indirect costs only.</p> <p>Estimate of commercial price acknowledges that the value of such contracts varies depending on a number of factors and negotiations. The supplier should identify a reasonable and fair price, e.g. from previous similar contract.</p>

Appendix 5. Annual Budget Cycle

Months are a guide, it is recognised that meetings may fall within the end of the previous or beginning of the next month. Best fit should be used but deadlines must be met.

Month	Action	By Whom	Sign Off / Oversee
September	Action year end processes from guidance provided	SBM	CFO
	Complete end of year budget monitor to inform your year-end process. Agree balances with CFO after audit	SBM/CFO	Auditors
	LGB approve wording for inclusion into Governance Statements if applicable	LGB	BoT
	Receive year-end budget monitor confirming c/fwd (subject to adjustments made by auditors)	LGB	BoT
	Review Trust Investments	CFO	BoT
	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
October	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	BoT Approve Governance Reports for Financial Statement	BoT	Auditors
	Census Summary to CFO	SBM	CFO
November	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	Light touch budget monitor report to 30 th Oct to LGB with any known substantial adjustments highlighted	SBM	LGB
	Auditors present draft Financial Statements to BoT for approval	Auditors	Members
December	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	Financial Statements Published. Copies to Members	Auditors/CFO	
	ITT Grant Audit returned	SBM	Auditors
	NCTL Collaborative Fund Audit returned	SBM	Auditors
January	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	Full Budget Monitor as at 31 st December with SBM Report. Update, & Publish in BPS & import & copy to CFO	SBM	LGB
	Annual Accounts Return to ESFA	CFO	Auditors
	Full Budget Monitor workbook to 31 st December with report	LGB	BoT
	Review Risk Register	HT / LGB	BoT
	Review Trust Investments	CFO	BoT
February	Census info to CFO	SBM	CFO
	Budget planning meeting with Trust		
	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	SLT begin to plan staffing requirements for next year's budget taking any proposals to LGB	HT	
March	Finance visit to schools	CFO/SFO	
	Light touch budget monitor to P6	SBM	LGB
March	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	Academies received General Annual Grant Statement	SBM	
		HT SBM + TLP	
April	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	In-depth Budget Monitoring as at 31 st March. Publish & lock in BPS & Import. (Will inform consolidated BFRO report) & copy to CFO	SBM	CFO
	Budget planning processes continue	SBM	
	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair

May	Claim NDDR Rates from ESFA	SBM	
	BFRO Return to ESFA	CFO	ESFA
	Teacher's Pension Audit	CFO	Auditors
	Prepare draft budget for review by Trust and approval by LGB	HT/SBM	CFO/SFO
	Review Risk Register	HT / LGB	BoT
	Review Trust Investments	CFO	BoT
	Census Summary to CFO	SBM	CFO
June	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	In-depth Monitor of budget to P9. Publish & lock updated scenario in BPS & import	SBM	CFO
	Budget planning visit to schools to assist/review draft budget if required	CFO/SFO	LGB
	Recommend budget for approval	LGB	BoT
	NCTL Grant Evaluation submitted	CEO	
July	Monthly Report to Chair	CFO	Chair
	BoT Approve Trust's Annual Budget for coming year	BoT	Minutes
	Submit consolidated BFR to ESFA by end of month	CFO	ESFA
	Prepare information for the Financial Statements	CFO	
August	Monthly Report to the Chair	CFO	Chair

- Light touch Budget monitoring – minimally this is producing the Governors Report and checking % spend and investigating any concerns. Making a note of any anomalies. Please update and import a new budget if there have been any significant staffing or other changes. This Governors Report should form part of the Budget Monitor Workbook.

Appendix 6. Supplier Request Form

TARKA LEARNING PARTNERSHIP - SUPPLIER SET UP REQUEST

Please complete all sections of this form

SECTION A Requesters information

School Name:	
Contact Name:	
Contact email:	

SECTION B Organisation's information

Supplier Name	
Supplier full legal name (if different to above)	

Supplier Location Details

Primary Address line 1	
Primary Address line 2	
Primary Town / City	
Primary Postcode	
Telephone Number	
VAT Registration Number	

SECTION C Order Details

Order Email Address	
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SECTION D Payment Details

Account Name	
Account Number	
Sort Code	
Bank Name	
Remittance Email Address	

Payments to individuals	An Employment Status Check must be carried out. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax and the result printout attached. See Finance Policy for further guidance
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Confirmation of Bank Details	Supply evidence of bank details on company stationary or email from a company email account
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SECTION D Central Finance Team Use Only

System Checked to avoid duplication		Supplier Code Number	
Employment Status Check Attached (if		Actioned By	
Bank Details Confirmed from company source		Date	

Appendix 7. Request for Internal Transfer

This form must be only be used for inter-company transactions. [That is invoicing that is taking place between other settings within the Tarka Learning Partnership.]

Only internal ledger codes are to be used when completing this form.

This form must be raised by the setting raising the invoice and sent to the setting which is being charged.

If the setting accepts the charge they must complete the coding details and the name of the authorising officer and send it to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk . The form must arrive from the paying schools email address. It is the responsibility of the paying school to ensure that this charge has been agreed in line with the scheme of delegation.

INTERNAL INVOICE REQUEST		
School Name		
School Number	Person Completing Form	Financial Year
Invoice Description		
Details to be credited		
Ledger Code	Description	Amount
School to be Charged		
To be completed by paying school		
Details to be debited		
Ledger Code	Description	Amount
	Authorised By	Date:
Name:		
<i>This form should be returned to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk from an email account of the school being debited.</i>		
<i>For use by central staff</i>		
Date posted	By Whom	Reference

Appendix 8. Requisition Form

If not raised electronically by the budget holder

Supplier		Is supplier on the system?	
Department		Ledger code (if known)	
Budget Holder Name			

Please note all delivery charges incurred with this order will be charged to this department. If internet orders are being placed and a VAT receipt cannot be supplied the cost including VAT will be charged to the department.

Part number	Description	Unit price	Qty	Total
Order total				

Special instructions if any.....:.....

I certify that the items ordered are required for the Academies purposes and that the correct procedures for tenders and quotations have been observed in accordance with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

I will notify the School Business Manager within 2 days of receipt, if the goods or services ordered are not of satisfactory quality or fit for their intended purpose.

Office Use Only							
Cost Centre funds available		Comparative quotes required	Yes / No				
Requisition approval:							
Budget Holder Name		Notes:					
Budget Holder Signature							
ORDER NUMBER							

Appendix 9. Request to set up a Customer

TARKA LEARNING PARTNERSHIP - CUSTOMER SET UP REQUEST

Please complete all sections of this form

SECTION A Requesters information

School Name:	
Contact Name:	
Contact email:	

SECTION B Organisation's information

Customer Name	
Customer full legal name (if different to above)	

Customer Location Details

Primary Address line 1	
Primary Address line 2	
Primary Town / City	
Primary Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Email Contact:	

SECTION D Central Finance Team Use Only

System Checked to avoid duplication, attach to school location to customer		Customer Code Number	
--	--	----------------------	--

Appendix 10. Request for Reimbursement

Use only if reimbursement cannot be made via the Travel and Expenses Form through the payroll system.

Reimbursements will be made by BACs directly to the claimant's bank account.

Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by the receipt for the goods or services received. The school may refuse requests for reimbursements if spending is in excess of the cost centre funds available; or it considers the purchases made are outside of the schools policies and practices.

Reimbursement to:			
Amount £	Department (if known)	Details Goods / Services received:	
In order for reimbursement to be made into your bank account please complete the details below:			
Payee Name			
Bank Account Number			
Bank Sort Code			
Claimants Signature			
School Use only			
Appropriate vouchers held: Yes / No	Department Funds Available? Yes/No	Authorised by:	
<i>if reimbursement made by cash sign below:</i>	Entered onto ACCESS by:		
Payment Received:		Date:	
For reimbursement by BACS scan and email to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk			
Central Team Use			
Processed By	Date	Bank reference No	Date

Appendix 11. Request for refund of Income

Sign up to the schools On-Line payment facility in order to receive an instant refund directly into your bank account!

Request for a refund			
Parent Name:			
Child's Name:		Class/Form	
Reason:		Amount:	
Select One Refund Method:			
Online Refund		Tick box	
<i>Only available if the original payment was made on-line. If you do not currently use our on-line payment system please ask for your login details. We will be happy to set you up. We aim to process this request within 2 working days</i>			
Bank Account Details		Tick box	
<i>We aim to process this within 3 working days. Provide details below</i>			
Bank Account Name:			
Account Number:		Sort Code:	
Signature:			
Cheque		Tick Box	
<i>We aim to process these within 5 working days. Provide details below. Cheques will be sent home via pupil post. If you require them to be sent by post a charge of 50p will be deducted for postage.</i>			
Payee Name:			
Payee Address: <i>(only if cheque to be posted, a 50p deduction from the refund will be made)</i>			
School/Trust use only:			
School No:		Dept:	
Ledger			
Approved by:			Date:
ACCESS Description entered: (this will appear on bank statement)		ACCESS Ref:	

Appendix 12. Disposal of Assets

DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT FROM FIXED ASSET REGISTER
With residual value of £500 or more

Section 1. Finance Use only -

Item to be disposed of	
Serial Number (if applicable)	
Reason for disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broken - Surplus to requirements - Irreparable - Beyond economic repair - Obsolete - Other – <i>please specify</i> <p align="right"><i>(delete as appropriate)</i></p>
Department Code	
Nominal Code	
Fund	
Original Cost	
Accumulated Depreciation	
Residual Value	£
Value obtained for item	£
Grant Received for Original Purchase	Yes / No
Reinvested Grant	Yes / No
Repayment to Secretary of State	Yes / No
Value repaid	£ if applicable
Removed from Fixed Asset register	Date

Section 2. GOVERNOR APPROVAL FOR ITEMS WITH A RESIDUAL VALUE* OF £500 OR MORE
(*Cost less accumulated depreciation).

Residual Value	£
Action to be taken	Sale / Disposal
By Whom	Head Teacher / School Business Manager / other – specify
Signed:	
Designation:	Chair of Governors
Date Minuted:	

Appendix 13. Register of Gifts and Hospitality

Tarka Learning Partnership Gifts & Hospitality Register

Record of gifts given / received of a value exceeding £25

School Name:					
Employee Name	Nature of gift/hospitality	value	Company/individual name	Date	Given / Received

Appendix 14. VAT guidance for Income

TARKA LEARNING PARTNERSHIP VAT GUIDE FOR INCOME					
INCOME VAT CODES					
Outside Scope- Code 10. Non- Business Supplies are items that are covered within the remit of funding agreement or covered in Charitable activities (academies exemptions)					
Standard Rate - Code 1: Business Supply - supply of services for activities generally considered to be outside of 'education'					
Exempt - Code 9: Activities are classed as 'exempt' under VAT rules but also have restrictions on the amount of VAT reclaimable on expenses (the central team will deal with this calculation)					
Zero - Code 0: Where the supply is vatable but the VAT rate attached is zero.					
It is your responsibility to select the correct VAT code when accepting income. If in doubt please check with the Central Team. finance@tarkatrust.org.uk or 01271 443123					
Area of supply	Conditions of supply	Ledger code	VAT Classification	VAT Code	Notes
Catering					
If you operate your own catering services?	Sales to pupils	1505	Outside Scope	10	
	Sales to staff - normal	1510	std	1	
	Sales to staff - duty	1510	Outside Scope	10	* No VAT recovery on duty meals if supplied through a contract otherwise part of non-business activities
	Sales to other schools	1512	Outside Scope	10	As long as supplied at non-profit. If profit making then Standard
	Sales to other third parties	1512	std	1	Unless their activities are education. Pre-schools are welfare/care not education so would be a business supply
If you outsource your catering	Commission income	1455	std	1	
	Sales to staff (if not direct to provider)	1510	std	1	
Lettings					
Do you have letting income?	10 week lets/lets > 24hrs:	1420	exempt	9	clubs / association and groups of individuals
	Sports hall - no equipment	1420	exempt	9	
	Sports hall - inc equipment	1420	exempt	9	
	Astro turf/pitches	1420	exempt	9	
	One off lets < 24hrs:	1420	exempt / Std	9 or 1	If letting to individuals and commercial 'non-profit' then Exempt. If used for commercial purposes then standard rate
	Sports hall - no equipment	1420			
	Sports hall - inc equipment	1420			
	Astro turf/pitches	1420			
	Function rooms	1420	Exempt / Std	9 or 1	If letting to individuals and commercial 'non-profit' then Exempt. If used for commercial purposes then standard rate
	Other rental income	1420			
Uniforms					
If you sell uniforms to your own pupils	Own pupil sales - childrens sizes (<=14)	1515	zero	0	
	Own pupil sales - adult sizes(>14)	1520	std	1	
	Secondhand/thrift	1525	outside scope	10	Donations
	shop' sales of secondhand	1525	Zero/std	0 or 1	If items are sold at a price the < or > than 14 rules apply.
If sales are by others	Commission income	1455	std	1	
Vending machines					
	Sales - with clear link to catering		Outside Scope	10	Situated in canteen where pupils can obtain a lunch
	Sales -non catering		std	1	If for staff, sports/community use or areas of school away from the canteen
	Commission income	1455	Std	1	
Shop					
If you make sales to your pupils	Tuck sales		std	1	Unless there is clear link to catering i.e sales could be deemed as a meal, then it would be outside of scope.
	Stationery sales	1425	Outside Scope	10	If goods handed over in class and are at cost or below
	Stationery sales	1425	std	1	If there is a 'shop' or the transactions are at profit.
	Book sales	1425	outside scope	10	If transaction is in class & at or below costs. If profit then Zero for books that you read. Std for books that you also work in
Advertising/sponsorship					
	Advertising/ sponsorship income		std	1	
Car parking					
	Car parking income		Std	1	
Consultancy					
If your staff do consultancy work		1495	Std	1	Finance consultancy / Management support (activities relating to outside the classroom)
	Consultancy income	1495	outside Scope	10	non-business - school to school support teacher - teacher, training
Admissions					
If you sell tickets or charge admission to events	Admissions income	1575	std	1	Income for this is only classed as a donation if everyone is admitted with a 'shake the bucket' type collection.
Transport					
If you hire out your own minibus?	16 seats with Driver		Zero	0	check if different number of seats as rules change according to size of vehicle
	16 seats without a driver		Std	1	

Mast rentals/Way Leaves	Mast rental income	1420			Check with central team
Staff accommodation	Staff accommodation income				Check with central team
Salary recharges			std		If not providing to a charity organisation and it is not directly education activities
If you get paid by others for use of your staff?	Education Activities	1440, 1480	Outside Scope	10	Where fees relate to school to school support teacher - teacher, training, Support to Charities
	Non-education activities	1440,	Std	1	Where fees do not relate to a supply to another educational establishment/ or are for non-education purposes
Services under SLA					
If you supply services under SLA	Education services	1565	Outside Scope	10	for education to other educational establishments/education charities
	For other services	1565	Std	1	where focus is not teaching support, i.e management/finance.
University income					
	Hosting Student Teachers	1430	out side	10	Hosting of ITT Students
Nursery income Outside of LA funded hours, collected directly	2 year olds	1540	exempt	9	Partial restriction on VAT reclaims - central team will calculate
	Specify age range 3-5	1540	exempt	9	Partial restriction on VAT reclaims - central team will calculate
Other income					
School trips	educational day visits	1535	outside scope	10	Day Trips - As long as no profit is made on these activities.
	Residentials e.g Skiing holidays	1535	outside scope		Residentials - As long as no profit is made on these activities.
	Duke Edinburgh/satellite rugby club	1535	outside scope		As long as no profit is made on these activities.
Donations	PTFA/Friends or others	1450	outside scope	10	
	- Gifts in kind - services/labour - Gifts in kind - goods				Check with central team Check with central team
Fund Raising	- School fetes & Raffles for fundraising	1580	exempt		Where activity is run by the school itself. * partial restriction on VAT reclaims - central team will calculate
Extended Day	Breakfast & Afterschool Holiday Clubs	1540, 1550, 1555	outside scope	10	By special exemption DFE 'wrap around/extended day' activities
Insurance Claims	Insurance re-imburement relating to staff	1475, 1485	outside	10	
	Insurance Claims not relating to staff	1490	outside	10	
Exam & Tuition Fees	ITT Tuition Fees	1435	outside	10	Tuition fees for teacher training
	Other Tuition Fees	1465	Zero	0	
	Exam Fees	1470	Zero	0	
	Music lessons	1500	outside scope	10	
other	Recharge of overheads eg sports facilities				Check with central team
	Photography commission	1455	std	1	
	photocopying/telephone/resources	1460	std	1	
	Prom events	1575	std	1	In dispute with HMRC. Currently classed as VATable
	From CPD events	1570	outside	10	course fees where supplied to other education establishments

Appendix 15. Currency Cards

To be used for each card currency card issued

School Use Only: Minimum 10 working days ahead of the trip		
Card Name:		
New PIN requested by email from finance@tarkatrust.org.uk at least 10 days ahead of the trip	Staff Name: Initials:	Date:
Central Team advised of currency required & provided with costing sheet to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk	Staff Name: Initials:	Date:

EMPLOYEE TO DECLARATION

I confirm that I am responsible for ALL transactions from the date and time stated below until the card is returned to the school office at the time and date recorded.

I confirm that I have received a new PIN for this card.

I will obtain receipts for every transaction. where this is not possible I will record the detail of any unreceipted transactions below with details of goods purchased, the amount, the supplier, reason for purchase and reason for no receipt.

Card Name	Date Issued	Time	New PIN received	Staff Name	Signature
Card Name	Date Returned	Time	Number Receipts	Total Spend	Signature
Unreceipted Transactions – if any					
Goods Purchased	Date	Time	Amount	Supplier	Reason no receipt
Name:		Signed:			
School Use Only: Immediately upon return of the card and in the presence of the temporary card holder					
I confirm receipts agree as stated above		Signed:			
Name:					
Confirm return of card to finance@tarkatrust.org.uk and place the card in the school safe.		Staff Name:		Date:	
		Initials:			
Upon receipt of transaction list:					
Transactions matched to receipts and entered into finance system		Signed:			Date