

Scheme of Delegation

A framework for accountability

2021-22

Version 1.6

July 2021

Victoria Academies Trust Scheme of Delegation

Overview

All governance flows from the board of trustees who have legal responsibility for the operation of the trust. The scheme of delegation provides for a number of functions to be delegated so decisions can be made. These include to the following individuals:

1. Board of Trustees (BOT)
2. Chief Executive (CEO)
3. Chief Operating Officer (COO)
4. Directors of Schools (DoS)
5. Headteachers (HT) (as listed on GIAS and does not include heads of school or equivalent)
6. Head of Finance and Operations (HoFO)

Certain functions and decision-making may be delegated to committees. These include:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Audit, Finance and Risk (AFR) | 4. Performance Management and Pay (PMAP) |
| 2. Health & Safety Committee (HS) | 5. Standards Committee (SC) |
| 3. Executive Leadership Team (ELT) | 6. Academy Council (AC) |

This scheme of delegation covers six key themes:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Education (page 4) | 4. Operational (page 16) |
| 2. Finance (page 7) | 5. Governance (page 20) |
| 3. People (page 11) | |

Key

‘BOLD’ The person responsible for leading the consultation process **appears in bold** and is required to ensure that the relevant approver (in green) is fully informed of any recommendations and/or outcomes of the consultation process.



For each section, the scheme determines who has delegated authority and/or power of approval. This is highlighted in green.



For each section, the scheme determines who must be consulted before approval. This is highlighted in yellow.

The scheme of delegation is to be read in conjunction with a number of key documents. These include:

- Trust Policies
- The Academy Trust Handbook (formally known as the Academies Financial Handbook)
- Academy Council Handbook

The scheme of delegation will be reviewed and updated as required and at least annually for the start of the new academic year.

Document control

Changes history

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Amended by</i>	<i>Approved by</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
1.0	15.02.18	CEO	Board of Trustees	Final version for publication on website and distribution
1.1	16.03.18	CEO	Board of Trustees	Inclusion of dismissal section (pp 17-18), requirement for independent panel member for parental complaint hearing (p 20).
1.2	11.10.18	CEO	Board of Trustees	To include ‘A Framework for accountability’ in the title
1.3	25.10.19	ELT	Board of Trustees	Updates for new academic year
1.4	25-11-20	ELT	Board of Trustees	Updates for new academic year
1.5	4-12-20	ELT	Board of Trustees	Updates regarding Covid related school closures
1.6	9-7-21	ELT	Board of Trustees	Updates in line with new structure

1. EDUCATION DECISIONS

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Approve trust annual strategic plan		ELT	CEO				
Approve academy improvement plan		AC				HT	
Approve trust self-evaluation		ELT	CEO				
Approve school monitoring and self-evaluation		AC				HT	External consultants
Authority to monitor standards and overall effectiveness		AC				HT	External consultants
Approve trust curriculum approach		ELT			DoS		
Approve individual school curriculum		AC				HT	
Approve trust teaching and learning approach		ELT			DoS		
Approve individual school teaching and learning approach		AC				HT	
Approve trust assessment approach		ELT			DoS		
Approve individual school assessment policy		AC				HT	

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Approve any other school policy (see note below)		AC				HT	
Approve school pupil premium strategy /impact report		AC				HT	
Approve school sports and PE impact report		AC				HT	
Approve school SEND impact report		AC				HT	
Authority to issue a fixed-term exclusion						HT	
Authority to exclude permanently, pending meeting						HT	LA/Behaviour support
Hearing of disciplinary committee meeting (PermEx)		AC (plus 1 other)				HT	Local authority
Approval to a change of school hours		ELT				HT	
Approval to change term times, including extra training days		ELT				HT	
Approval to close a class or year group in a school (or 'bubble' as defined by Trust RA)		ELT				HT	Where applicable, PHE advice will take precedence
Approval to close a whole school						HT	Where applicable, PHE advice will take precedence, and CEO will be consulted immediately

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Approval to change of admissions policy		ELT				HT	LA
Approval of safeguarding policies and procedures		AC				HT	LA where required
Approval of termly headteacher report to the AC		AC				HT	
<p>School policies must follow statutory guidance/trust approach. Where there is a trust policy this should be adopted by schools following board approval.</p> <p>Any school policies outside of these should be approved directly by Academy Councils.</p>							

2. FINANCE DECISIONS

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Staffing appointments							
Any staff hire with salary costs greater than £100k per annum		PMAP	CEO				
Any central trust staff hire outside of agreed budget		ELT					
Any school staff hire outside of agreed budget		ELT			DoS		
Decision to purchase supplies (goods), services or works (all in budget) including purchase order approval							
Entering into a financial or operational (non educational) contract or SLA (new or renewal)				COO (F&Ops)		HT	HoFO
Expenditure over £50,000				COO			
Expenditure between £7,501 and £50,000							
Expenditure between up to and including £7,500							
Expenditure over £50,000 for capital works		ELT		COO			
Expenditure between £7,501 and £50,000 for capital works				COO			

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Expenditure up to £7,500 for capital works							
Note: Any works that are greater than £1,000 require at least 3 quotes. Any capital works not in budget will follow the SoD for works not included in budget below.							
Authorising Credit Card expenditure over £2,000						HT	
Authorising Credit Card Expenditure up to £2,000							
Credit card expenditure is a recognised as a high risk item for fraud, hence lower limits than standard expenditure							
Decision to purchase supplies (goods), services or works not included in budget							
Authority to approve purchase not in budget		ELT					
Note: Once approval has been given by the COO, any purchase above £50,000 or 5% of budget (whichever is lower) needs board approval. A budget recovery plan must be submitted to the COO and monitored by ELT.							
Decision to agree to enter a lease							
To enter into any finance or operating lease		AFR		COO			Auditors
Note: Finance leases must not be entered into without ESFA prior approval. Before any leases can be considered, regardless of value, approval to proceed must be sought from the COO. All paperwork pertaining to a lease must be retained by the school and copies sent to the COO.							
Virements and budget variances							
Virements greater than £1,000						HT	
Virements up to and including £1,000						HT	HoFO
Writing off bad debts							
Between £250 and £44,999			CEO	COO			

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Up to £249.99						HT	
Note: Debts exceeding 1% of total annual income or £45,000 require approval from the ESFA per single transaction							
Approval to accept a quote or tender							
From a minimum of 3 quotes over OJEU limit				COO			
From a minimum of 3 quotes above £7,501 and up to OJEU				COO		HT	
From a minimum of 3 quotes up to £1,001 - £7,500						HT	
Note: Approval includes quotes from a minimum of 3, a formal tendering process or when accepting a quote/tender other than the lowest. Approval is required from the COO prior to considering obtaining quotes or tendering.							
Signing contracts (in budget)							
Above £50,000 or exceeding a term if 5 years	Chair	AFR					
All other contracts between £7,501 and £50,000		AFR	CEO	COO			
All contracts up to £7,500			CEO	COO			
Any income exceeding £20,000 per annum		AFR		COO			
Any supply to third parties (excluding lettings or rentals)						HT	
Note: Schools must inform and seek advice from the COO prior to signing all contracts for supply to thirds parties.							

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Annual budgets							
Approving annual trust budget		ELT		COO			
Approving individual school budgets		ELT		COO			
Authority to set individual school budgets		ELT				HT	HoFO
Authority to monitor, review and challenge budgets		ELT					HoFO
AC will be involved in assessing impact of specific funding only, for example PE funding, Pupil Premium, catch up premium, SEND.							
Fraud / theft and/or irregularity							
Investigation into fraud, theft or irregularity, suspected included		AFR		COO			
Note: Any instances of fraud, theft and / or irregularity exceeding £5,000 individually or £5,000 cumulatively must be notified to the ESFA immediately.							

3. PEOPLE DECISIONS

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Staffing structures within approved budgets							
Approving staffing structure at trust-level		ELT	CEO				
Approving staffing structure at school-level		ELT			DoS		
Appointment of...							
Chief executive officer	Chair	ELT					RSC
Chief operating officer		ELT	CEO				
Central trust staff (ELT)		ELT	CEO				
Central trust staff (non-ELT, such as consultant, admin etc.)		ELT		COO (Ops)	DoS (Ed)		
School headteacher		AC ELT			DoS		
School leadership team including SENCo.		AC			(member on panel)	HT	
School teacher, HLTA, TA or any other support staff						HT	
School admin/office, catering, site, cleaning etc.						HT	HoFO (for office/finance/site)

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Note: All appointments must be in line with the trust recruitment policy. All SLT appointments must comply with the trust optimum organisational structure. In the event that they don't, the ELT have the power to intervene. The Board reserve the right as single employer to refuse approval for the employment of any member of staff in any of its school.							
Signs employment contracts on behalf of the employer for the appointment of...							
Chief executive officer	Chair						
Chief Operating Officer							
Central trust staff (ELT)							
Central trust staff (non-ELT, such as consultant, admin etc.)							
School headteacher							
School leadership team including SENCo.							
School teacher, HLTA, TA or any other support staff							
School admin/office, catering, site, cleaning etc.							
Appraisal and pay progression of...							
Chief executive officer		PMAP					External consultant
Chief Operating Officer		PMAP	CEO				

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Central trust staff (ELT)		PMAP	CEO				
Central trust staff (teachers pay and conditions staff)		PMAP			DoS		
Central trust staff (NJC)				COO			
School headteacher		PMAP			DoS		
School leadership team including SENCo.		PMAP				HT	
School admin/office, catering, site, cleaning etc.						HT	
Note: Annual appraisal meetings for teachers/trust staff are to be completed in line with PMAP meetings in Autumn Term.							
Trust wide pay policy including annual increments		ELT PMAP		COO			
Settlement / Severance agreements for all staff...							
Approval of settlement agreement offer to be made		ELT	CEO				
Approval below £50,000 (and reported to Board)		ELT	CEO	COO			
Approval above £50,000 (and reported to Board)		ELT		COO			
Note: No discussions in regard to a proposed agreement settlement can take place without prior approval from the CEO. All ongoing negotiations are to be led by the COO. All agreements will be formally reported to the board at the next available meeting.							

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Suspension of...							
Chief executive officer	Chair						
Chief Operating Officer							
Central trust staff (ELT)							
Central trust team		ELT		CEO to be informed			
School Headteacher							
School staff		ELT				HT	
Note: A formal suspension cannot be actioned without first informing Legal/HR and obtaining legal advice. The CEO must always be informed prior to seeking advice for suspension (unless the subject of the suspension) and certainly no later than one working day of the date of a suspension. The CEO has delegated powers to suspend any member of staff.							
Disciplinary hearings of...							
Chief executive officer		Board panel					Investigation officer + HR
ELT		Board panel					Investigation officer + HR
Central trust team		ELT					Investigation officer + HR
School Headteacher							Investigation officer + HR
School leadership team							Investigation officer + HR

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
School teachers							Investigation officer + HR
School non-teachers and support staff							Investigation officer + HR
Dismissal of...							
Chief executive officer		Board panel					Advice from HR
ELT		Board panel					Advice from HR
Central trust team							Advice from HR
School headteacher							Advice from HR
School staff other than headteacher						HT	Advice from HR
Note: The assumption is that all dismissal hearings are held following a formal hearing that subsequently recommends dismissal (e.g. management if absence).							
Formal hearings for grievance claims made by...							
Chief executive officer		Board member					Investigating officer
ELT							
Central trust team		ELT					
School Headteacher							
School staff							
Note: Hearings are made up of a single-person decision maker (as delegated) who may appoint an investigative officer senior to the complainant to present at the hearing. If the grievance is against the person delegated to hear the grievance then it shall be heard by the next level up on the scheme.							

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Deals with formal parental or external complaints (stage 2) against...							
Chief executive officer	Chair (or nominated)						
ELT							
Central trust team		ELT					
School Headteacher							
School staff							
Note: The individual delegated to hear the complaint may appoint an investigating officer senior to the employee whom the complaint involves in order to investigate the complaint and present their findings in a report. In the case of parental complaints at Stage 3, the panel that hears the case must always consist of a member who is not based at the school and is therefore independent. This can be a School Councillor from another school.							

4. OPERATIONAL DECISIONS

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Premises, property and asset management							
Approval of annual strategy and monitoring of policy		ELT		COO			
Approval of asset management plans		ELT		COO			
Disposal of assets greater than £5,000 NPV		ELT		COO			

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Disposal of assets less than £5,000 NPV				COO			
Approval of major capital works, building projects etc.		ELT		COO			
Approval of CIF bids or similar		ELT		COO			
Approval of leases related to buildings		ELT		COO			
Note: Only the board can dispose of assets that include land and buildings and only following written formal approval from ESFA.							
Risk							
Approve and monitor the trust risk register		AFR ELT		COO			
Authority to take the necessary actions to mitigate trust risk		ELT		COO			
Approval and monitoring of individual school risk register		ELT				HT	
Authority to take actions to mitigate risk at school level.						HT	
Note: Each academy council will receive a termly report on the relevant risk register although the responsibility for mitigating and reducing the risk has been delegated to the headteacher with support from the ELT and COO.							
Health and safety							
Approval of trust health and safety strategy and policies		ELT HS		COO			

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Authority to take action to ensure trust policies in place		ELT HS		COO			
Authority to take action to ensure school policies in place		AC HS				HT	
Legal							
Authority to seek advice from ACS for minor advice		ELT					
Authority to seek advice from ACS for major advice				COO			
Note: 'Minor' advice is that which is likely to take less than a 15-minute phone call. Anything above this is considered 'major' and likely to incur a cost above the annual fee. Always seek advice from the COO prior to contacting legal. In the event of the legal advice being HR-related, the procured HR provider may be contacted but only with approval from the COO.							
Information and communication technology							
Approval of trust ICT strategy		ELT					Trust IT lead
Authority to take actions to implement ICT strategy		ELT		COO			Trust IT lead
Communications							
Approve requests for press releases identified as a risk		ELT	CEO				
Approve marketing and PR press releases at trust level		ELT	CEO				
Approve marketing and PR press releases at school level							
Approve any requests for external writing, articles etc.							

FUNCTION	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Headteacher	Other
Authority to make trust level social media posts e.g. twitter							
Authority to make school social media posts e.g. twitter							
Authority to ensure school websites are compliant						HT	
Authority to make changes to trust website							
Authority to make changes on GIAS or equivalent							
Membership and conversion							
Approval of new schools joining the trust		ELT	CEO				
Authority to undertake due diligence		ELT	CEO				
Authority to project manage conversions		ELT		COO			
Authority to move to sign legal papers (lease, CTA, FA)			CEO	COO			
Note: The COO has delegated authority to sign the legal client care letter and undertake all discussions, negotiations etc. on behalf of the trust with legal and relevant third parties (e.g. DfE, councils, unions etc.).							

5. GOVERNANCE DECISIONS (BOARD LEVEL)

FUNCTION	Members	Board of Trustees	Committee	CEO	COO	Director of Schools	Other
Approve amendments to Memorandum and Articles							
Approve scheme of delegation and terms of reference							
Approve statutory policies							
Authority to direct academies to comply with agreed policy							
Appointment of members and trustees							
Appointment of external auditor, bankers and insurers							
Receive the annual accounts							
Approve the annual accounts							
Membership of Leaders' Forum							HTs and 'heads of'
Membership of AC							