



TRUE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Operational Controls Manual	
Policy Ref Number: TLP/33	Reviewed by: Chief Executive Officer Approved by: Trust Board
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The Trust Board of The TRUE Learning Partnership (TL) has overall legal responsibility for the operation of the Trust and the Academy Schools within it. The purpose of the **Operational Controls Manual** is to give detail behind the **Scheme of Delegation** by presenting a set of delegation levels in respect of finance, HR and other organisational controls to facilitate the operational running of the Academy Trust and each Academy School.

The summary structure of delegation is as follows:

1. Head Teacher
2. Head Teacher and FBP (Finance Business Partner)
3. Local Governing Board (LGB)
4. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and/or CEO
5. Finance Committee of the Trust Board
6. The Trust Board (i.e. the board of trustees)

* Local Approved Persons (LAP) will be officially approved by the Trust Board. It is expected that such a person would be the School Business Manager within a large school organisation. Where the local school infrastructure does not allow for an “approved person” to act in that role, this function will be carried out by the FBP on the schools’ behalf.

FINANCE

RESPONSIBILITY	Headteacher	Head Teacher & FBP	LGB	CEO, Finance Committee	Trust Board
<p>Budget Forecast Returns</p> <p>Submission of consolidated Budget Forecast by the dates determined by the ESFA planning calendar for the following financial year including capital projects. Noting Trustees expect a 3% surplus on Income</p>	<p>The Headteacher will have primary responsibility for preparing the draft budget in consultation with their FBP and/or LAP in accordance with a pre-arranged timetable.</p>	<p>The Headteacher and FBP will refer the Draft Budget to the LGB who make a recommendation for approval to the relevant Finance Committee of the school.</p>	<p>The School Finance Committee LGB, alongside the LGB, will provide scrutiny to the proposed budget and make recommendation for approval to the Finance Committee.</p>	<p>The Finance, Committee will carry out a review of the draft budget forecast and make a recommendation for approval to the Trust Board.</p>	<p>The Trust Board will approve the consolidated Budget Forecast for the MAT including the individual school budgets prior to submission to the ESFA by the date determined by the ESFA for the BFR submission</p>
<p>Revisions to budget during the year as appropriate</p>	<p>The Headteacher will propose variations to the budget during the year as appropriate in consultation with the FBP noting the expectation to achieve the approved budget.</p>		<p>Review of the of in year revisions to budget</p>	<p>Any approved in-year revisions to the budget will be reported to the CEO and the Finance Committee</p>	<p><i>The initial Budget Forecast for a newly converting academy will be based on the Pre-Academy Report and must be approved by the Trust Board before the school converts to academy status and joins the MAT.</i></p>
Please see appendix 1 for specific approval hierarchies . Any changes to these limits will be recommended by Finance Committee and approved by Trust Board.					

RESPONSIBILITY	Headteacher	Head Teacher & FBP	LGB	CEO, Finance Committee	Trust Board
Reporting and Internal Audit Requirements	The Headteacher is responsible, with the support of appropriate staff, for providing information and assisting reporting and internal auditing.	<p>The HT and BFP will monitor expenditure to ensure it remains within the limits permitted by the Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>The BFP via the CFO will provide a finance report to the Finance Committee in such form and at such intervals as the Trust Board may from time to time require and in line with the reporting requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook.</p>	The Head Teacher and BFP will provide finance reports to the LGB in such form as the Trust Board have approved.	<p>The Finance, Committee will monitor the management accounts and compliance with internal auditing requirements on an ongoing basis and report any concerns to the Trust Board.</p> <p>The Finance Committee will recommend the appointment of an internal audit function to conduct reviews of processes and procedures to provide assurance that these are efficient and effective.</p>	<p><i>The Trust Board will review the performance of the school against its budget as part of its review of the level of autonomy it should be granted at the first meeting in each financial year.</i></p> <p>Trust Board approve the appointment of the Internal Auditors.</p>
Statutory Audit Procedures	The Headteacher is to provide information and assistance to statutory audit procedures as the Trust Board may from time to time require.	The HT and BFP are to provide such information and assistance in relation to statutory audit procedures as the Trust Board may from time to time require.		The Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for recommending the statutory accounts for approval to the Trust Board	The Trust Board will present the statutory accounts to Members at the AGM

Legal Claims	<p>The Headteacher is to notify the BFP, CEO and CFO of any actual or potential claims or proceedings affecting the school as soon as becoming aware of them. The CEO/CFO will inform the Chair of Trustees accordingly</p> <p>The Headteacher will act on any instructions received from the CEO or CFO</p>	The HT, BFP, CEO and/or CFO will take appropriate advice (legal/insurance etc.) and advise the Headteacher as appropriate in line with this guidance, keeping the Trust Board informed		The Trust Board may instruct the CEO and/or the Headteacher to take such action as it may reasonably require in relation to the defence or prosecution of any claim or proceedings.	
Donations	<p>Up to £5,000 (School based)</p> <p>Head Teacher to determine whether the donation is consistent with TL's objects; recorded as per "TL Donations Policy"</p>	Greater than £5,000 the Headteacher informs the CEO.		Greater than £5,000, the CEO is to notify the Trust Board before the donation is accepted.	Greater than £5,000 Trust Board decides to accept the donation; referencing the "TL Donations Policy"
Grant submissions, grant claims and DFE returns	<p>Two signatories from the following as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head Teacher and CFO - CFO and CEO - CEO and Chair of the Finance Committee - CEO and Chair of the Board of Trustees 				

HUMAN RESOURCES LEVELS OF AUTHORITY

The processes for reducing staffing, reviewing staffing structures, and dealing with disciplinary and capability matters must be followed in all cases and advice taken from the appointed TL Director of HR and Personnel, CFO, CEO and taking into account any benchmarking, ICFP, SMRA or any other external reviews.

In all cases, the CEO may nominate an alternative representative if they are unable to make up a panel, who will carry the full voting rights of the CEO.

Appointments/Recruitment (internal and external)

Post	Delegated Authority	
CEO	Trust Board (minimum of 3 members, with non-voting co-optees as required, from LGBs, Headteachers of Academy Schools and other external experts) will form an appointments panel and will lead on the HR recruitment for the post. This panel will be formally approved, with scope of remit approved, by the full trust board. The appointments panel will make a recommendation for appointment to the full trust board; appointment is confirmed by majority vote of the full trust board.	
Headteacher of an Academy School	<p>The Local Governing Body will nominate a minimum of two LGB members to serve on an appointments panel.</p> <p>The Trust Board will nominate a maximum of two TB members to serve on an appointments panel.</p> <p>The CEO (or their alternate) will serve on an appointments panel.</p> <p>The appointments panel must be constituted of an odd number of members.</p> <p>Recommendation for approval is based on a majority vote of the appointments panel. Each member of the appointments panel will have equal voting rights in making a recommendation for appointment to the Local Governing Body.</p> <p>The Local Governing Body will approve or decline the recommendation of the appointments panel.</p> <p>Upon approval, the LGB will seek approval from the Trust Board. The Trust Board retain the right of veto over an LGB recommendation.</p> <p>In the event of a decline by either the LGB of the recommendation from the appointments panel, or the Trust Board of the recommendation of the LGB, the process will be declared non-concluded and a full recruitment process will be rerun.</p>	
CFO	<p>The Trust Board will establish an appointing committee. The appointing committee will be made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum of 3 members of the Trust Board - The CEO - Minimum of 1 external advisor to the Trust Board - Other non-voting members as required <p>The appointing committee will make a recommendation for appointment to the full trust board; appointment is confirmed by majority vote of the full trust board.</p>	
TL Executive Management Group	The CEO will lead on the appointments process of a	<p>An appointments committee will be established, made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEO

	member of the Exec Management Group (non-CFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CFO - 1 Trustee <p>The appointments committee will confirm the appointment upon a majority vote.</p>
Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Recruitment of individual schools	<p>The Headteacher will notify the CEO as soon as he/she becomes aware of a potential vacancy in the SLT.</p> <p>The Headteacher will lead the recruitment and appointment process following the MAT approved procedures with the LGB</p>	<p>The appointing committee will be made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Headteacher - LGB members as per their locally passed resolution - Non-voting co-optees as required by the LGB <p>The CEO, or their approved representative, may be a full member of the appointing committee. Each member of the appointing committee has equal decision voting rights. The CEO may act as the external expert adviser to the locally convened panel to facilitate appointments.</p> <p>The appointing committee will confirm the appointment upon a majority vote.</p>
Teacher Recruitment	The Headteacher will lead the process for filling teacher vacancies in conjunction with the SLT following the MAT approved procedures.	
Support Staff Recruitment	<p>The Headteacher, or their representative, will lead the process for filling any vacancy for a member of support staff in conjunction with the SLT following the MAT approved procedures.</p> <p>For senior support staff positions (i.e. a position which may seek “local approved person” status) the CFO may be a full member of the appointing committee.</p>	
Appointment of External Consultants	<p>The Headteacher is to notify the CEO promptly of any decision to appoint an external consultant.</p> <p>Any such appointment will be made in the name of the MAT.</p>	<p>Any decision concerning the appointment of an external consultant is to be taken jointly by the Headteacher and the CEO.</p> <p>The appointment of external consultants to support an individual school will need to be counter signed by the CEO for quality assurance purposes.</p>
Disciplinary Cases and Dismissals		
For all disciplinary, capability, ill health cases, dismissals and redundancy (Trust Board will determine and approve redundancy) the following delegation model shall apply. Please note, in constituting the appropriate panels, all protected characteristics under the Equalities Act will be consider in order to ensure that the panel is equitably constituted.		

Posts	Delegated Authority	Appeal
CEO	Dismissal: 3 Trust Board Members Disciplinary: 3 Trust Board Members	Dismissal: 3 Trust Board Members Disciplinary: 3 Trust Board Members
CFO	Dismissal: 3 Trust Board Members Disciplinary: CEO and 2 Trust Board members	Dismissal: 3 Trust Board Members Disciplinary: 3 Trust Board Members
Headteacher	Dismissal: CEO 1 x LGB member 1 x Trust Board member Disciplinary: CEO 1 x LGB members 1 x Trust Board Member	Dismissal: 2 x Trust Board members 1 x LGB member Disciplinary: 2 x Trust Board members 1 x LGB member
SLT	Dismissal: CEO; Head Teacher and 1 LGB Member Disciplinary: Headteacher	Dismissal: 2 x LGB members 1 x Trust Board member Disciplinary: CEO 2 x LGB members
TL Executive Management Group posts	Dismissal: CEO, CFO, 1 x Trust Board Member Disciplinary: CEO	Dismissal: 3 X Trust Board Members Disciplinary: CFO, 2 x Trust Board Members
All other posts	Headteacher	CEO

Grievance Cases		
Post against grievance submitted	Delegated Authority	Appeal
CEO	3 Trust Board Members (non-Chair of Trustees)	Chair of Trust Board and 2 Trust Board Members
Headteacher	CEO and 2 Trust Board Members, unless it is submitted by the CEO, then 3 Trust Board Members	3 Trust Board members
CFO	TCEO and 2 Trust Board Members, unless it is submitted by the CEO, then 3 Trust Board Members	3 Trust Board members
SLT	Headteacher, unless it is submitted by the Head Teacher, then CEO	CEO unless involved in Stage 1, then Trust Board member
TL Executive Management Group posts	CEO unless it is submitted by CEO, then Trust Board member	Trust Board member
All other posts	Headteacher	CEO, unless involved in Stage 1, then Trust Board Member
Other HR functions		
Function		Delegated Authority
Settlement agreements up to and including £10,000		Headteacher and CFO to agree terms and CEO or Chair of Trustees to sign
Settlement agreements in excess of £ 10,000		CEO and CFO or two trustees to agree terms and Chair of Trust Board to sign
Settlement agreements in excess of £ 50,000		Approval to be sought from the ESFA/HM Treasury
Signature of Letter of Appointments		
Post	Delegated Authority	
CEO	Chair of Trust Board	
Headteacher	CEO and Chair of the LGB	
CFO	CEO	
School Business Manager	Headteacher or CFO	
All other posts	Headteacher or LAP	

Administration of employment contracts, pay and conditions of services (with the exception of previous delegated authorities)	Central Services HR or local school HR function if given delegated approved status.
Additional Payments	
Post	Delegated Authority
CEO	Trust Board on recommendation of CEO's pay committee
Headteacher	LGB's Head Teacher Pay Committee on recommendation of CEO
Chief Finance Officer	Trust Board on recommendation of the CEO
Senior leadership posts	Headteacher
School Business Manager	Headteacher or CFO
All other posts	Headteacher
Shared TL and Academy School posts	Panel constituted of LGB Pay Committee and CEO
Acting up allowances will be made in line with the trust's pay policy and the approval signatories are the same as the additional payments approval process.	
Performance Management	
Post	Delegated Authority
CEO	Chair of Trust Board plus 2 other Trust Board members
Headteacher	CEO plus 2 LGB members
CFO	CEO plus 2 other Trust Board members
Senior Leadership Posts	Headteacher in accordance with list of agreed reviewers approved by the CEO
All other posts	Line manager in accordance with list of agreed reviewers approved by the Head teacher
Shared TL and Academy School posts	Trust Board Pay Committee
Determination of CEO and Chief Financial Officer pay range	Trust Board in conjunction with external independent consultancy support
Determination of Headteacher's salary scale	Trust Board Pay Committee on recommendation from CEO and LGB Head Teacher Pay Committee
Determination of pay range for an individual with a salary in excess of £55,000	Trust Board Pay Committee on recommendation from Headteacher and LGB
Determination of pay range for an individual with a salary less than £55,000	Headteacher in partnership with LGB pay committee
Determination of pay progression of the CEO and Chief Financial Officer	Trust Board Pay Committee on recommendation of Performance Management

Determination of pay progression Headteacher within their pay grade	CEO and LGB Head Teacher Pay Committee on basis of performance management review; reported to the Trust Board
Determination of pay progression of members of SLT within their pay grade	Headteacher recommendation to the LGB pay committee on the basis of Performance Management; reported to the Trust Board
Determination of pay progression of teaching posts below SLT within their pay grade (including Threshold)	Head Teacher recommendation to the LGB pay committee on the basis of Performance Management; reported to the Trust Board

Re-grading/Re-designation/increase or decrease in hours	
Post	Delegated Authority
Salaries in excess of £100,000	Trust Board
Salaries in excess of £52,000	CEO and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, on the recommendation of LGB
Salaries between £25,000 and £52,000	LGB
Salaries below £25,000	CFO or Headteacher
Changes to Terms of Employment requests from individual member of staff (Below SLT level) e.g. flexible working request.	Headteacher or CFO for TL Exec Management staff
Changes to Terms of Employment requests from individual member of staff (SLT level) e.g. flexible working request.	CEO
Revisions to Pay and Conditions	Trust Board
Decision to confirm Redundancies	Trust Board
Authorisation of redundancy/early retirement payments	CEO as long as redundancies were approved by Trust Board
Creation of new permanent posts	
Creation of permanent new posts with salary above £52,000	Trust Board on the recommendation of CEO
Creation of permanent new posts with salary between £20,000 and £52,000	CEO
Creation of permanent new posts with salary below £20,000	Headteacher or CFO
Creation of temporary new posts of up to 1 year	Headteacher or CFO

EDUCATION		
Delegated Duty	Delegated Authority	Comment
Safeguarding		
A Designating Safeguarding Lead has been appointed and they are fully trained and aware of their responsibilities	Headteacher	The Trust will, in respect of each Academy, act in accordance with, and be bound by, all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions for safeguarding. All schools will adopt the same Safeguarding Policy.
All staff have access to and have read the Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe guidance as a minimum		
Ensuring the CEO is informed immediately of any allegation made against a member of staff		
Delegated Duty	Delegated Authority	Comment
Admissions	LGB	Each individual school will have its own admissions policy, in line with all current legislation. If seeking to change the school's PAN, formal approval must be gained from the Trust Board.
Academy Hours and Term Times	The LGB is responsible for setting the opening and closing times for schools taking into consideration the views of the Headteachers, the Trust Board, the CEO and the local community.	
Health and Safety	<p>The Headteacher is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a health and safety culture throughout the academy • ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities • drawing up site specific health and safety procedures (with the support of the School Business Manager or other appropriate staff) 	It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to ensure that Health and Safety laws are complied with and the appropriate Health and Safety documentation is in place. The operational compliance of this function will be delegated on a day to day basis to the CEO and their team to oversee.

EDUCATION		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring staff are aware of their responsibilities updating the LGB in this area 	
Permanent Exclusions	Headteacher and LGB	
<p>Policies Requiring Consistency Across the Trust e.g. Safeguarding, HR and Finance policies</p>	<p>The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that MAT policies and procedures are applied across the school.</p> <p>The LGB will note the policies requiring consistency across all the academies as approved by the Trust Board and monitor their implementation.</p>	<p>Policies requiring consistency across all the schools in the Trust will be overseen by the CEO. The Trust Board (or one of the committees of the Trust Board) will approve all such policies and any amendments to them.</p>

STRATEGY				
RESPONSIBILITY	Headteacher	LGB	CEO	Trust Board
Partnering Arrangements (e.g. membership of Teaching School Alliances)	<p>The Headteacher is to notify the Trust CEO of any proposals to enter into, renew, amend or terminate any partnering arrangement.</p> <p>The Headteacher will provide such further information and assistance as the CEO may need in order to make a decision concerning the arrangement.</p>	The LGB is to take the lead in developing the school's strategy on partnerships.	The CEO will be responsible for approving any new partnering arrangements.	
<p>Expansion of existing facilities/ taking on new premises</p> <p>Processes and procedures must be in accordance with the Manual of Financial Procedures, the DfE Academies Financial Handbook and all statutory requirements</p>	The Headteacher is to notify the CEO of any proposal to expand any existing facilities at the school.	The LGB is to take the lead in developing the school's strategy on the use of existing facilities and any plans for expansion.	The CEO will assess the viability of any proposal put forward by the Headteacher prior to the development of the Business Case.	The Trust Board will review any Business Case and decide whether to approve it or not.

Other major strategic decisions	<p>The Headteacher is to notify the CEO of any proposal of a major strategic nature.</p> <p>The Headteacher will provide such further information and assistance as the CEO may need in order to make a recommendation concerning the proposal.</p>	The LGB is to consider and recommend as appropriate such proposals in accordance with the school's strategy	The CEO will assess the viability of any proposal put forward by the Headteacher and make recommendations to the Trust Board.	The Trust Board will be responsible for approving any major strategic proposal.
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Appendix 1 – Financial Approval Limits

Purchase Order Approval Limits

< £5k	A member of SLT, Department head, Team Leader if approved to do so by either the Headteacher (HT) or the CFO.
> £5k to £50k	Always the FBP (Finance Business Partner) and one of HT or LAP (e.g. School Operations Manager). If FBP away then CFO
>£50k to £100k	The FBP, the HT and CFO
>£100k	Relevant Trust Committee CEO and/or Chair of Trustees as signatories to the contract.

- All expenditure must be within budget or the budget holder must have HT or FBP pre-approval for over spending.
- Values are exclusive of VAT
- For a call-off order for items such as utilities, rubbish collection, catering, telephones, printing and examination costs where the purchase is a necessity and invoices are received monthly/quarterly the HT and FBP (both required) will have approval up to £100k.
- The FBP must ensure any expenditure is linear with Trust/School strategy
- HTs are accountable for achieving the target approved by the Trustees and Governors on an annual basis. The FBP supports and advises in achieving this target. The HT has authority in liaison with the FBP to veer within the budget between in-year non-pay expenditure categories on a non-recurrent financial basis within reasonable limits where there is a clear justification. However, the HT is accountable for achieving the target [exceptional events notwithstanding]. Any proposals which create obligations in future years (e.g. leases, staff changes, multi-year contracts) require the consultation of the CFO prior to any commitment.

Authority to write off Bad Debts

< £10	Staff with Financial responsibilities have approval to write off small amounts where the cost of chasing is outweighed by the potential receipt
> £10<£100	The FBP
> £100 to £1k	The HT and FBP. The CFO is informed.
> £1k to £2.5k	All three of HT, CFO and CEO.

>£2.5k	Finance Committee
> £10k	Trust Board > £45k requires Secretary of State Approval

Authority to raise Sales Credit Notes

	Where there is an administrative error on an invoice (e.g. wrong subsidiary or company named/VAT code etc.) and the credit note will correct this amount with an immediate new invoice for the same NET value being raised then approval by the FBP only is required.
Where the raising of a sales credit note will mean a reduction in the amount to collected from a customer:	
<£100	FBP
> £100 to £1k	The HT and FBP. The CFO is informed.
> £1k to £2.5k	All three of HT, CFO and CEO.
>£2.5k	Finance Committee
> £10k	Trust Board

Quotation/Formal tender acceptances

The limits below also pertain to accepting quotes other than the lowest price.

< £5k	One of the HT, LAP, FBP
> £5k to £50k	Always the FBP and one of HT or LAP Written details of a minimum 3 quotations obtained should be prepared by budget holders and attached to requisitions
>£50k to £100k	All three of: HT, CFO and FBP Written details of a minimum 3 quotations obtained should be prepared by budget holders and attached to requisitions
>£100k	Relevant Trust Committee

Where obtaining three quotes has not been possible please discuss with the CFO before progressing with the transaction. There may be a limited number of exceptions (e.g. examinations).