



WOODBIDGE
TRUST

Procurement & Tendering Policy

Updated April 2025

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This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

- Financial Procedures Manual
- Financial Scheme of Delegation
- Scheme of Delegation
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption
- Whistleblowing Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the rules by which Woodbridge Trust (the “Trust”) spends money, and explains the Trust's approach to the purchase of goods, works and services for its schools.

The Trust is obliged to comply with the Academy Trust Handbook, Funding Agreements with the Department for Education (“DfE”), any DfE guidance including “Effective Buying for your School” and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). Under our Funding Agreements and as a charity, the Trust's board of Trustees have specific obligations to ensure value for money.

It is important to note that the Trust is the sole legal entity which can enter into contracts for itself and any Academies. The Academies themselves are not separate legal entities and any contracts awarded by individual Academies will be binding on the Trust.

This Policy is mandatory and applies to everybody in the Trust and at Academies who are responsible for purchasing, whether as an employee or contractor.

2. PRINCIPLES

This document applies to any contract for services, supplies or works which result in payment being made by the Trust or any of its Academies.

When considering the procurement of, and tendering for goods and services, consideration should be given to **probity, accountability** and **value for money**. The Trust value of Integrity will inform our financial practices.

- All purchases with a value greater than £10,000 must be put out to formal tender. Work specifications to be agreed by the Academy Headteacher.
- For purchases up to £20,000, provided the expenditure is included in the approved budget, the decision as to which tender to accept will be taken by the Executive Leadership Team, in consultation with the Academy Headteacher
- For purchases exceeding £20,000, provided the expenditure has been budgeted for, a decision will be recommended by Academy Headteacher. The decision will need to be ratified by the Finance & Resources Committee.
- Where expenditure is not included in the budget or anticipated expenditure exceeds the budget allocation, the decision as to which tender to accept will be taken by the Trust Finance Committee, in line with their terms of reference and then ratified by the full Trust Board; and
- The reasons for accepting a particular tender must be documented, especially if it is decided to accept other than the lowest tender. All decisions must be reported to the full Trust Board

- For any major building works of a value greater than £40,000 the services of an architect would be engaged to deal with the handling of specifications and suitability to tender.
- Wherever possible and practicable the schools within the Trust will collaborate so that resources or services can be tendered across the Trust, so greater value for money can be achieved.

3. TENDERING RULES

The minimum required number of tenders or quotations from appropriate contractors for a given estimated value of contract are;

- Up to £3,500 a minimum of one oral or on-line quotation (low value)
- Above £3,500 and up to £10,000 (medium value) three written quotations using the competitive quotes form – appendix a (
- Above £10,000 and up to £40,000, three formal quotations to be submitted in writing by a specified date and time and based on a written specification and evaluation criteria (medium value)
- Above £40,000 and up to Public procurement threshold (High Value)
- Above £214,904 public procurement thresholds five tenders, ensuring compliance with Academy Trust Handbook, DFE guidance on buying procedure and procurement law, Procurement Act 2023

No matter what procurement process is followed, a specification will always be written outlining what the trust wants to procure. All specifications will include:

- A precise description of the goods, work or services required and what it should do.
- The amount required and when it is needed.
- The expected quality of the goods, work or services.

3.1 Small and medium purchases

Any purchase or service estimates below £3,500 are considered to be 'small' purchases, and any below £50,000 are considered to be 'medium' purchases. Purchases below £20,000 do not require approval from the board of trustees.

Where possible, the trust will use a framework agreement to purchase small and medium goods, works or services. Where it is not possible to procure medium purchases through a framework agreement, quotes from at least three suppliers are obtained prior to purchasing. A comparison of different suppliers, including their reputation will help the trust develop a shortlist of at least 3 suppliers we want to approach.

All suppliers will be sent the same information, as follows:

- Specification
- Deadline for submitting the quote
- When the trust will make a decision

- How the supplier can ask questions about what the trust is buying or its process
- A link to the trust's terms and conditions, if needed

Award criteria will be set before any suppliers are contacted. Criteria may include;

- How well the supplier met our specification
- The whole life cost of the contract, which may include;
 - The sale price of the goods, works or services
 - VAT
 - Delivery charges
 - Maintenance costs
 - Running costs
 - The cost of removing and disposing of an item or service once we no longer need it.
- Whether there will be price increases or decreases over the life of the contract
- Value for money

The CFO will evaluate the quotes, a record of which will be kept

3.2 Large Purchases under the GPA procurement threshold

The trust will make high-value purchases without a framework only in rare circumstances and only with legal support.

Any purchase or service estimated to cost over £50,000 is put to formal tender. In the case of major building works or construction, the services of an architect are sought before the tendering process is undertaken.

When the trust makes purchases with a value under the GPA procurement threshold, it:

- Creates a specification
- Assesses the market - we will prepare for the tendering process by developing our knowledge of the market. We will find out how many suppliers are available and the best way to advertise our contract to a range of suppliers
 - Check the trust's position in relation to public procurement thresholds.
 - Develop a service level agreement - an SLA sets out the standards of service expected from a supplier. Some suppliers may have their own SLAs, which the trust will consider using on a case-by-case basis
 - Prepares the contract and tender documents.
 - Advertises in the right places - the contract will be advertised where suppliers are likely to look, such as:
 - Advertises a contract notice using the e-notification service Find a Tender (FTS) – this is a requirement if the contract is over the GPA procurement threshold
 - The government's Contracts Finder service
 - Local or national newspapers

- Education publications or websites
- Trade magazines
- Considers using an expression of interest to cut the number of bids needed to assess later.
 - Sends an invitation to tender to people who reply to the advert.
 - Fairly assesses all the bids received, using the same process. At least two people will independently score and evaluate each bid and then compare notes after completing their evaluations; records of decision making and moderation decisions will be kept
 - Chooses the bid that offers the best value for money.
 - Awards the contract to the highest scoring bidder.

3.3 Large purchases over the GPA procurement threshold

If it is estimated that the cost of a contract is above the GPA threshold for procurement spending, the trust will follow GPA procurement directives and seek legal advice.

The current GPA thresholds are:

Goods	£214,904
Works	£5,372,609
Services	£214,904

A 'light touch regime', with a higher threshold of £663,540, applies for some services that are specifically for education provision. We will seek professional advice to determine if any procurement run by the trust qualifies.

This document does not set out the detailed process in the Regulations which must be followed whenever the total value of the contract exceeds the Upper threshold - Any contracts valued above these thresholds are subject to the full suite of regulations governing public contracts and must be managed by the CFO who will work in collaboration with the relevant project manager. Where contracts are above these thresholds, we will be required to publish a procurement notice on the new UK e-notification service Find a Tender.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER

The following points will be considered when deciding which tender to accept:

- The overall price and the individual items or services which make up that price.
- Whether there are any 'hidden' costs; that is additional costs which the school/Trust will have to incur to obtain a satisfactory product.
- Whether there is scope for negotiation, whilst being fair to all tenderers.
- The qualifications and experience of the supplier, including membership of professional associations.

- Compliance with the technical requirements laid down by the school.
- Whether it is possible to obtain certificates of quantity
- The supplier's own quality control procedure; pre sales demonstrations, after sales service and, for building works, a minimum six month defects period and insurance guarantees.
- The financial status of the supplier.
- References from other establishments.
- Understanding & compliance with Health & Safety, CDM regulations and Child Protection issues related to working on a school site
- For OJEU contracts, a mandatory Alcatel period (ten calendar days) will apply.
- In the case of building works, where the tendering process is being carried out by the architect or quantity surveyor, they will be responsible for checking the documentation of the lowest tender before making a recommendation to the school/Trust.

Once a tender / quote is accepted the trust sends a contract, such as a purchase order, to the chosen supplier, including details of:

- What has been purchased.
- The total cost.
- The delivery address.
- The delivery date and any other important dates.
- When the trust will pay the cost.

All goods receipts and invoices are retained within the Finance System and these are retained for 7 years. The finance Assistant / manager processes each receipt and ensures they are available for inspection where necessary. Goods are inspected upon delivery. Any items that are either not part of the order, damaged or not fit for purpose are returned.

The Academy's Funding Agreement should be considered when applying this policy

5. TRUST WIDE TENDERING

An ongoing programme of reviewing services across schools in the Trust is to be established in order to improve efficiencies and value for money

- Where appropriate, for both new and established SLAs, suppliers will be asked to tender in respect of contracts for both schools
- Where goods or services can be obtained of acceptable quality and competitive price on a Trust-wide basis, the decision to award the tender will reside at Trust level, but Local Management will be kept informed at all times
- In the case of Trust-wide contracts, the Trust's Chief Financial Officer will lead the process. The Executive Headteacher will have oversight of the process and make any recommendations to the Trust Board

6. APPROVED SUPPLIERS

In addition to the above tendering requirements the trust has also compiled a list of Supplier which it has deemed to offer best value to the Trust as a whole from a financial and quality point of view. At least annually the list will be reviewed and amended as appropriate to reflect the changing needs of the Trust and the continuing developments of Supplier relations. A full list of the approved suppliers can be found in Appendix B

7. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

All members, Trustees, Governors and key staff must declare any pecuniary interests. Any changes to a declaration should be reported to the Trust's CFO or HR Department without delay.

As required by the Academy Trust Handbook, Trusts **must** report all contracts and other agreements with related parties to ESFA in advance of the contract or agreement commencing or being renewed, using ESFA's related party on-line form.

Trusts **must** obtain ESFA's prior approval, using ESFA's related party on-line form, for contracts and other agreements for the supply of goods or services to the trust by a related party agreed on or after 1 September 2023 where a contract or other agreement exceeds £40,000 in the same financial year ending 31 August.

This approval requirement does not apply in the following circumstances:

- contracts and other agreements for the supply of goods or services to a trust by the following educational establishments:
- colleges, universities and schools which are sponsors of the academy trust
- state funded schools and colleges, including academy trusts.

For the purposes of reporting to and approval by ESFA, contracts and agreements with related parties do not include salaries and other payments made by the trust to a person under a contract of employment through the trust's payroll.

8. AUDIT TRAIL

The Trusts Accounting Officer must complete a DFE value for money statement each year. A clear audit trail must be kept for all purchases. The level of detail required will increase with the value of procurement. The written record must include;

- Who will be responsible for making the decision to procure and details of their decision making process
- Full minutes of meetings in which procurement was discussed
- Who was responsible for evaluation of tender and details of the evaluation if applicable

- Who was responsible for checking and receiving the goods or services and for authorising and making payment
- Details of the purchase itself, for example, what was purchased, from whom and for what price
- Details to be available for Trust audit purposes

In each case, the written record must include copies of all original documentation used during the procurement such as tender packs, quotes, contracts and invoices.

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

You must always check with the Chief Finance Officer if you are unsure about how this document may apply.

This document will be reviewed annually by the Trust. Any changes will be communicated to all Academy Leadership and individual Academy SLT members.

APPENDIX: A

Competitive Quotes Form Schedule of Quotations

Academy Name: _____

Goods or Services Purchasing: _____

What will the Goods or Services be used for:

Budget Provision _____

Supplier	Quote	Comments

Reasons for Accepting Quotation

Order No. _____ Authorised by _____

APPENDIX: B

Type of Supply	Supplier
Architects	Bradshaw Gass and Hope
Asbestos Management	Life Environmental
Auto doors services	Access doors
Cleaning Supplier	Samsic UK
Cleaning Products	System Hygiene
Clinical Waste	Cannon / Citron Hygiene
Confidential Waste	Shred It
Decorators	A M Edwards
Electrical Works	NDR
Electrical Works	Lyons Electrical
External Auditors	Xeinadin / Hallidays
Financial Information System	PS Financials
Firefighting equipment	Parr FM
Fire Risk Assessment	Total Fire Services
Furniture supplier	Egan Reid
Gas and Heating Services	Joules Property Services
Gas and Heating Services	Parr FM
GDPR - DPO	Bolton Council
Goods & Passenger Lifts	A1 / Sheridan Lifts
Hygiene / Cleaning Supplies	Ideal 365
Hygiene / Cleaning Supplies	Boss Direct
Hygiene Supplies	Gompels
Insurance (Commercial)	Zurich
Interactive Whiteboards	Blue Orange
Internal Auditors	DJH Business Advisors
Intruder and Fire Alarm Maintenance	Automatic Alarms
IT Services (Hardware & Software)	Blue Orange / SICT
Legionella Services	GMS / Joules Property Services
LOLER Audits / Hoist / Bed maintenance	Arjo
LOLER Audits / Hoist / Bed maintenance	Prism Medical
LOLER – Passenger lifts	British Engineering Services
NLP	Pulse (NW) Ltd
Paper	XL Office Supplies
Payroll	Bolton Council

Photocopiers	Arena
Pool Maintenance	Pool Tech
Sanitary / Nappy Bins	Rentokil / PHS
School Information Management System	Bromcom
Sickness Insurance	Bolton Council
Solicitors	Browne Jacobsons
Supply Staff	Randstad Education
Supply Staff	Teaching Personnel
Supply Staff	Tradewinds
Supply staff	Hays