



Aurora Academies Trust
Terms of Reference – Finance, Audit, HR and Risk committee

Name of Committee: Finance, Audit, HR and Risk committee

Purpose statement

1. To ensure the Trust has strategic plans in place to deliver effective learning and teaching within the budget.
2. To oversee and approve the Trust's programme of internal scrutiny.
3. To ensure that risks are being addressed appropriately through internal scrutiny.
4. To report to the board on the adequacy of the Trust's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and management of risks.
5. To review the staffing structure across the Trust and its schools, as part of the annual budget review. To receive HR reports on staffing changes and any staffing issues, including sickness absence trends and corrective actions being taken.
6. To review Trust buildings and other assets including ICT provision to ensure that the learning environment is safe, warm, dry and the best that is reasonably practical within the constraints of funding available.

General Procedures

1. At least three Committee members will be appointed by the Trust board, and the chair of the Committee (who shall be a trustee) will be appointed by the Committee members on an annual basis. The committee may appoint a vice chair.
2. The committee may appoint co-opted members as required, although the number of co-opted committee members shall be less than the number of trustees on the committee.
3. The term of office of a co-opted member shall be four years.
4. Co-opted members shall have voting rights on the committee.
5. A quorum shall be two members who are trustees, subject to the majority of committee members present being trustees.
6. The committee shall meet at least three times per year.
7. If the Chair is absent from any meeting, the vice chair will chair the meeting.
8. Trust officers will attend meetings; that will usually be the Chief Executive (Accounting Officer) and the Chief Finance Officer; other officers to attend as appropriate.
9. Minutes will be kept of all meetings and distributed to the Trust board once agreed as a correct record by the chair. Apart from confidential items these are open for public inspection.

Remit

1. Finance
 - a) To agree the annual Trust and academy budgets prior to the beginning of the financial year which will be recommended to the Trust board for approval.
 - b) To monitor and review the finances of the Trust and to comment on how this may affect the development of the Trust and the strategic plan.



Aurora Academies Trust
Terms of Reference – Finance, Audit, HR and Risk committee

- c) To prepare the audited financial report for approval by the Trust board and submission in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act and the Department for Education (DfE).
- d) To undertake any other responsibilities assigned to the committee in the Scheme of Delegation

2. Risk Management

- a) To assess the risks arising from the Trust's operations including the likelihood and materiality of each risk, regularly reviewing the relevant portions of the Trust's risk register (note that teaching and learning risks are reviewed by the Education, Standards & School Performance Committee).
- b) To report to Trustees on the overall assessment, including input from the Education, Standards & School Performance Committee.

3. Audit

- a) To agree and monitor compliance with the expected practice, financial policies and segregation of duties as outlined in the financial regulations document and authorisations policy; ensuring this is in line with the latest guidance from the Department for Education as published in Academies Trust Handbook.
- b) To review the risks to internal financial control and plans to address any issues identified.
- c) To agree a programme of work annually to deliver internal scrutiny that provides coverage across the year with particular reference to the areas identified in the risk register.
- d) To maintain and ensure there is a central register of business interests which is compliant with the requirements set out in the Academy Trust Handbook and that all governance stakeholders and senior employees have declared any related party interests.

4. HR

- a) To review staffing structures across the Trust as part of the annual budget review.
- b) To receive HR reports for each Trust location that includes such information as the Committee requires to be able to monitor the relevant aspects of the Trust staff
- c) To discuss the financial implications of HR issues

5. Premises

- a) To review asset management plans for each school in the Trust
- b) To review and agree any capital grant bids
- c) To monitor spend against capital grants to ensure best value is being achieved.
- d) To monitor significant building projects to ensure the project specification is being met, to the required timetable and within budget