



Tendering and Procurement Policy

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Together we **Exceed**



Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Purchasing.....	2
3. Procurement Limits.....	2
4. Purchase orders up to £4,000 (inclusive)	3
5. New Suppliers.....	3
6. Purchase Orders of over £4,000 but less than or equal to £30,000.....	4
7. Purchase orders of £30,000 to £50,000	4
8. Requisitions over £50,000	5
9. Forms of Tenders	5
10. Tender Process	6
11. Purchase of ICT Equipment.....	8
12. Appendices	10

1. Introduction

1.1 Exceed Academies Trust (the Trust) aims to achieve value for money on all its tendering and procurement activities.

2. Purchasing

2.1 The Trust must demonstrate the proper and effective use of public funds. The main requirements are:

- Probity – to demonstrate that all parties dealing with the Trust are dealt with on a fair and equitable basis and that there is no private gain, favouritism or corruption involved in any of the dealings of the Trust;
- Accountability – the Trust is publicly accountable for its expenditure and for the conduct of its affairs; and
- Value for Money – the achievement of value for money underpins the appropriate use of public funds.

2.2 Budget holders will be informed of the budget available to them at the start of the academic year. It is the responsibility of the budget holder to manage their budget and to ensure that funds available are not overspent. Full breakdown of budget, commitments and spend to date are accessible on PS Purchasing or can be provided on request by the Trust’s central finance team.

3. Procurement Limits

3.1 These limits are in place for the procurement of all goods and services but does not include the appointment of new staff or changes to staffing structures which is covered by the Scheme of Delegation.

3.2 There is additional guidance to follow for the procurement of ICT equipment. (see Section 11)

3.3 Amount	Procurement Rules	Process
Up to £4,000	Budget holder / Headteacher approval	Approved supplier
£4,000 to £30,000	Headteacher approval plus CEO approval	At least 3 quotes. Complete “ Request for expenditure over £4k ” (Appendix 1) document to be submitted to <i>finance@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk</i> for CEO approval before sending Purchase Order to supplier. (Appendix 1)
£30,000 to £50,000	Trustee approval (via approval at meetings)	Complete “ Request for approval of expenditure over £30k ” (Appendix 2) document to be submitted to <i>finance@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk</i> . Completed documentation sent to Trustees for approval before Purchase Order is sent to supplier.
Above £50,000	Trustee approval (via Trustee representative)	Tender process to be followed

4. Purchase orders up to £4,000 (inclusive)

- 4.1 Requisitions for goods must fully detail the items required, a price where known or quote if obtained, the nominal code/cost centre, and be signed as authorised by the budget holder or executive headteacher/headteacher/head of school and forwarded to the school office manager (or equivalent) to be entered on to PS Purchasing.
- 4.2 If a supplier is not on the system a “New Supplier” form should be completed to allow all the necessary checks to be completed by the central finance team (see section 5 below).
- 4.3 **Orders must not be placed directly with suppliers by email or telephone, unless in an emergency situation. An order should be entered as soon as possible after the event in this case.**
- 4.4 At the end of each day the Trust’s central finance team will send out by email all approved purchase orders to suppliers.

5. New Suppliers

- 5.1 Requesting a new supplier should be done so by the member of staff wishing to raise the Purchase Order. A new supplier form (Appendix 4) should be fully completed and emailed to the Trust’s central finance team. Any form not completed in full will be returned for missing information to be included.
- 5.2 Formal checks must be carried out by the Trust’s central finance team on any new supplier before approving, these may include:
- Cost
 - Risk
 - Company House/Sole Trader Checks
 - Convenience
 - Social Responsibility
 - Service
 - Delivery
 - Quality & safety

This aims to identify any related party or connected parties which are subject to additional scrutiny as detailed in the Academy Trust Handbook.

- 5.3 New suppliers are approved by the CFO within three working days. Once approved and entered onto PS Purchasing the requester will be notified and the order can be processed. The Trust’s central finance team should send an ‘Invitation to Engage’ to the supplier, asking them to submit bank details, using the official request form.

6. Purchase Orders of over £4,000 but less than or equal to £30,000

- 6.1 At least three written quotations must be obtained for all purchases over £4,000. This includes the purchase of goods and services and a series of purchases with the same supplier over a period of time.
- 6.2 An approval request form for expenditure over £4,000 must also be completed in full and submitted to finance@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk with copies of the accompanying three quotes attached in one email. This document must detail the preferred supplier and the reasons for this choice.
- 6.3 Copies of all documents received will be saved by the finance team as audit evidence of the process.
- 6.4 Requisitions between £4,000 and £30,000 must be authorised by the CEO of the Trust. All fully approved orders will be sent to suppliers by central finance team.

7. Purchase orders of £30,000 to £50,000

- 7.1 At least three written quotations must be obtained for all purchases between £30,000 and £50,000. This includes the purchase of goods and services and a series of purchases with the same supplier over a period of time.
- 7.2 An approval request form for expenditure between £30,000 and £50,000 must also be completed in full and submitted to finance@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk with copies of the accompanying three quotes attached in one email. This document must detail the preferred supplier and the reasons for this choice.
- 7.3 Copies of all documents received will be saved by the finance team as audit evidence of the process.
- 7.4 Once the request has been reviewed by the CFO the document will be sent to Clerk and Projects Officer for distribution to Trustees.
- 7.5 The Trustees will not usually approve expenditure requests outside of the meeting calendar schedule unless considered an emergency and therefore any requests should be planned and submitted 2 weeks prior to the Trustees meeting to give time for review by the CFO and CEO if required.
- 7.6 Once approved the Clerk will inform the Budget Holder the procurement has been approved and the Purchase Order can be raised on the system.

8. Requisitions over £50,000

- 8.1 All goods/services or for a series of contracts which in total exceed £50,000 are subject to formal tendering procedures as detailed below.
- 8.2 The central team must be notified in advance of a tender process over £50,000 before it commences. An indicative cost must be provided at this stage. The central team will then liaise with trustees to appoint a suitable representative Trustee to be involved in the process.
- 8.3 For purchases over £50,000 a trustee representative must be allocated to be involved in the process from the start and included on the selection panel. The CFO will also advise at this point which member of the central team or other trust representative who may be required to be part of the process.
- 8.4 Purchases over certain levels may fall under the UK Public Procurement rules and require advertising on Find a Tender (FTS).
- 8.5 The final decision will be ratified by the Trustees at their next planned meeting.

9. Forms of Tenders

- 9.1 There are three forms of tender procedure: open, restricted and negotiated and the circumstances in which each procedure should be used are described below:
- 9.2 **Open Tender:** This is where all potential suppliers are invited to tender. The budget holder must discuss and agree with the CFO how best to advertise for supplier's e.g. general press, trade journals or to identify all potential suppliers and contact directly if practical. This is the preferred method of tendering, as it is most conducive to competition and the propriety of public funds.
- 9.3 **Restricted Tender:** This is where suppliers are specifically invited to tender and must be approved by the CFO.

Restricted tenders are appropriate where:

- there is a need to maintain a balance between the contract value and administrative costs,
- a large number of suppliers would come forward or because the nature of the goods are such that only specific suppliers can be expected to supply the school's requirements,
- the costs of publicity and advertising are likely to outweigh the potential benefits of open tendering.
- there is a lack of time to go through an open tender procedure

- 9.4 **Negotiated Tender:** The terms of the contract may be negotiated with one or more chosen suppliers. This is appropriate in specific circumstances and where 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 the existing supplier are justified.

The CFO must approve the use of the Negotiated tender and report to Trustees the reasons behind this approach.

10. Tender Process

10.1 Preparation for Tender

Full consideration should be given to:

- Objectives of the project
- Overall requirements
- Technical skills required
- After sales service requirements
- Form of contract

It may be useful after all requirements have been established to rank requirements (eg mandatory, desirable, and additional) and award marks to suppliers on fulfilment of these requirements to help reach an overall decision.

10.2 Invitation to Tender (ITT)

If a restricted tender is to be used then an ITT must be issued.

A template ITT document is available to be completed by the school and support will be provided by the central team where necessary.

If an open tender is used an ITT may be issued in response to an initial enquiry.

An ITT should include the following:

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

All invitations to tender should be sent from the centrally managed *tenders@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk* email address currently managed by the Clerk and Projects officer.

10.3 Aspects to Consider

Financial

- Like should be compared with like and if a lower price means a reduced service or lower quality this must be borne in mind when reaching a decision.
- Care should be taken to ensure the tender price is the total price and that there are no hidden or extra costs
- Scope for negotiation

Technical / Suitability

- Qualifications of the contractor
- Relevant experience of the contractor
- Descriptions of technical and service facilities
- Certificates of quality/conformity with standards
- Quality control procedures
- Details of previous sales and references from past customers.

Other Considerations

- Pre-sales demonstrations
- After sales service
- Financial status of supplier.
- Suppliers in financial difficulty may have problems completing contracts and in the provision of after sales service.

10.4 Tender Acceptance Procedures

The ITT should state the date and time by which the completed tender document should be received by the Trust/school. Tenders received after the submission deadline should not normally be considered.

We expect all tenders to be submitted electronically to *tenders@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk* managed by the Clerk and Projects Officer.

In the event the tenders are not submitted electronically by email, the tenders should normally be submitted in plain envelopes clearly marked to indicate they contain tender documents. They should be sent to the Trust head office and not an individual school.

The envelopes should be time and date stamped on receipt and securely stored in the Trust prior to tender opening.

10.5 Tender Opening Procedures

The Clerk and Projects Officer will receive the tenders and share them with the panel once the deadline has passed.

If paper copies are submitted all tenders submitted should be opened at the same time and the tender details should be recorded. All members of the panel should be present for the opening on the tender documents.

A separate record should be established to record the names of the companies submitting tenders and the amount tendered. This record must be signed by all people present at the tender opening.

10.6 Tendering Evaluation Procedures

The evaluation process should include everyone selected to sit on the panel. Those involved should disclose all interests, business and otherwise, that might impact upon their objectivity. If there is a potential conflict of interest then that person **must** withdraw from the tendering process.

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

Where required by the conditions attached to a specific grant from the DfE/ESFA, the department's approval must be obtained before the acceptance of a tender.

The accepted tender should be the one that is economically most advantageous to the Trust/School. All parties should then be informed of the decision.

11. Purchase of ICT Equipment

11.1 For all ICT procurement of devices (not exclusively but including laptops, desktops, tablets, mobile phones and printers) which will be connecting to our trust network must involve discussion with the trust ICT manager prior to devices being ordered.

11.2 The wider trust needs should be considered and if we are making a significant investment in devices at one location there should be consideration for other locations too. Economies of scale can be realised when placing all devices on one order.

11.3 For ICT device procurement under £4k

Orders for devices under £4k are placed as described in Section 4.

The order is approved by the budget holder who is responsible to check that ICT Manager has been aware of the procurement needs and the devices are compatible and specification suitable.

For procurement of a small number of sundry items such as keyboards, mice, wires etc. this does not need ICT Manager input.

11.4 For all ICT device procurement £4k and £30k

The **Standard ICT Specification Document** (Appendix 3) should be prepared by the school with input from ICT Manager

The ICT Manager will then send the completed document, with details of the deadline for submission and where to send it to, to the trust's Clerk and Projects Officer who will send it out from *tenders@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk*

The Clerk and Projects officer will enter the details in the tender log spreadsheet.

More than three companies (ideally six) should be asked to quote, with a minimum of at least three responses are required before an order can be raised.

Suppliers will only be allowed to submit one quote and not able to resubmit a revised quote unless specifications are changed by the trust and all suppliers will be asked to resubmit.

Quotes **must** be returned to *tenders@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk*

Once the quotes have been received the Clerk and Projects Officer will share with the schools and ICT Manager who will discuss and decide which is the preferred supplier.





The school is then responsible for entering the order onto PS Purchasing and as detailed in section 6 an Approval request form must then be completed and emailed to finance@exceedacademiestrust.co.uk with copies of the quotes.

11.5 For all ICT device procurement above £30k

Section 11.4 continues to apply for all procurement over £30k. However between £30,000 and £50,000 a completed Approval Request Document (Appendix 2) must be submitted to Trustees for approval in advance of the order being approved.

Above £50,000 approval from the Trustees must be sought **prior** to the ITT being sent out. As with all procurement over £50,000 a Trustees and representative from the central team must be involved in the process.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Approval Request £4k to £30k	 Quotation%20Acceptance%20Form%20
Appendix 2 – Approval Request £30k to £50k	 Request%20for%20expenditure_over%2
Appendix 3 – ICT “Standard Specification Document”	 ICT Tender Template.docx
Appendix 4 – New Supplier Form	 New Supplier Form.docx