

Consultancy Policy

Statement of Intent

The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Trust works with consultants providing service to us and how the Trust supports other organisation as consultants.

The Trust is committed to ensuring income is maximised in line with the principles of the Trust and that consultancy service benefits all parties.

All staff and trustees are required to comply with this Consultancy Policy which sets out the framework within which the Trust both receives and carries out consultancy services.

All parties concerned are expected to be aware of their responsibilities with regard to consultancy. The implementation of the following practices and procedures will ensure that both time and funds are efficiently used to enhance students.

Aims

- ✔ All services offered will provide value for money
- ✔ All income is identified, and all collections receipted, recorded and banked promptly
- ✔ All services will promote good practice and enhance the reputation of the Trust
- ✔ All services should be provided with the overall aim to improve educational achievement

Responsibilities

Trustees

- ✔ The Trustees have overall responsibility for the management of the Trusts finances, including setting consultancy fees, deciding how revenue is distributed and making sure the delivery of services is reflective of the Trusts educational objectives
- ✔ Trustees must review all financial information provided to them to make sure spending is in line with projection
- ✔ The Trustees must consider advice from the relevant consultants, the CEO & COO with regard to consultancy matters
- ✔ The Trustees will, in consultation with the CEO & COO, agree prices for consultancy services and agree which services may be undertaken and by whom.

Finance & Audit Committee

The Trustees have delegated responsibilities to the Finance & Audit Committee in the following areas of financial consultancy:

- To Review consultancy services offered and received by the trust, the cost of such services and the overall impact on the Trust of offering the services

Chief Operating Officer

The COO is responsible for:

Consultancy Received:

- 📌 Assisting in the decision of who to engage, for which services and advice and determining how much funding is paid based on market value and best value principals
- 📌 Reviewing a consultants suitability to the role, services and/or advice they are engaged to supply
- 📌 Reviewing the impact and outcomes of the consultancy throughout the duration and final impact

Consultancy Offered:

- 📌 Assisting the Trustees in setting fees, deciding which services will be offered and determining how much income is paid directly into the Trust
- 📌 Recommending suitable members of staff for consultancy
- 📌 Reviewing the impact on the members of staff carrying out the consultancy regarding overall workload management

Pricing

All services are charged at a rate agreed by the Trustees and COO. When establishing the costs of services, the following must be taken into consideration:

- 📌 Value for money
- 📌 Time taken for delivery, this includes the cost of the consultant/s leaving their respective role and roles on-costs for staffing
- 📌 The number of consultants required
- 📌 Software/training packs that remain with the Trust including intellectual rights
- 📌 The cost of equivalent services from outside organisations (benchmarking)
- 📌 Rates will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Trustees and COO
- 📌 The reimbursement of travel expenses and allowances
- 📌 The ability of the Consultant to learn and develop themselves whilst engaging in the consultancy

Services

Services received:

Consultancy services will only be engaged where there is a clear advantage to the Trust and the services received outweighs the cost of the consultant being appointed.

All consultancy service provided to the Trust must be agreed prior to the delivery with the consultant and scrutiny of the fees or charges agreed by the COO prior to formal engagement.

A clear process of evaluation should be agreed at the onset of the consultancy which should state the intended outcomes and impact on the Trust. If the consultant does not provide a brief or agreement to negotiate the pro-forma attached to this policy should be used and adapted to need.

Consultant's expenses:

- ♥ the Trust will pay HMRC mileage rates, current rate is .45p per mile
- ♥ The Trust will pay for any accommodation required

Services offered:

Consultancy services offered will change throughout the academic year and will usually be tailored to the need. Agreement to any consultancy must always be agreed prior to delivery and scrutiny for fees charges agreed by the COO.

A clear brief for the consultancy services must always be agreed prior to delivery by the COO and a consultancy agreement signed. A pro-forma is attached to this policy.

Invoicing

All invoices are paid to the Trust and never to the consultant personally. No personal cheques will be authorised under any circumstances except where specifically agreed.

The Trustees have the right to decide how much of the income received is paid directly into the Trust funds and how much, if any, is received by the consultant.

Any consultancy work within the education community undertaken by an employee of the Trust outside of their contract of employment for payment direct to the employee, can only be undertaken with the consent of the COO. Consideration to the reputational risk to The Trust will be assessed when making decisions regarding consultancy outside of direct employment.

Consultancy work covers unpaid work and representation on other educational bodies in addition to paid consultancy work.

Internal financial controls

To ensure sound financial control, consultancy fees are to be processed in accordance with the principles below:

- 📄 The Budget Holder/ or persons requiring a service should raise a purchase order
- 📄 The COO processes it and signs up for the receipt of the service
- 📄 The service received are checked against each order by the budget holder or person/s requiring them
- 📄 The Finance Team process the invoice and update accounts
- 📄 All BACS must have two signatures by authorised signatories
- 📄 Accounting records should be securely stored and only authorised staff should have access to them

Debt recovery

The Trustees have a duty to ensure that the Trust receives all the funds to which it is entitled

The Principles

The Finance Committee will not write off any debit which exceeds £500, debts higher than £500 for consultancy must be referred to the Board.

A full record will be kept of debts owed to the Trust for 7 years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices

The Trust will not initiate legal action to recover debts unless the Finance & Audit committee agrees such action.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Finance Team will ensure that:

- 📄 Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and those records are maintained.
- 📄 A signed agreement exists for the consultancy
- 📄 Evidence of the steps taken by the Trust in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
- 📄 A final reminder is sent by recorded delivery to the debtor
- 📄 The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees:

- ✔ Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery
- ✔ Must approve any legal action taken if the debt is above £500
- ✔ Will ensure that when action is approved, it will be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting
- ✔ Will adhere to the privacy arrangements
- ✔ May delegate it's responsibilities under this policy to the Finance & Audit Committee

The process for pursuing debts

Full details of the debt recovery are contained in the financial procedures handbook.

Links to other Trust Policies

Anti-Fraud and Corruption

The Trust has a 'Zero Tolerance' policy towards fraud, bribery and corruption. We will always investigate and seek to take disciplinary and / or legal action against those who commit, or assist anyone committing, fraud or any other improper activities in our operations.

Safeguarding

The Trust recognises that it has a fundamental duty of care towards all children where its programmes and operations facilitate contact with children, or have an impact on children. This includes a duty to protect children from harm or risk of harm as a result of misconduct by our staff, consultants or partners, of poor practice or of the poor design or delivery of our programmes and operations. We achieve this through compliance with UK child protection laws and the Trusts Safeguarding Policy.

Counter-Terrorism and Anti-money laundering

The Trust is committed to ensuring that no funds are financing or supporting terrorist activity or money laundering and by ensuring all staff, consultants or partners understand their obligations to report any actual or suspected activity and to meet its obligations to report to external authorities where appropriate.

Equality, Diversity and Discrimination

The Trust policies commit us to ensuring that the Trust is an inclusive Trust where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of staff, consultants, partners and community are of equal worth and value. The Trust will work to ensure that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and that there is no unjustified discrimination in the recruitment, retention, training and development of our staff, consultants, volunteers or other partners.

Upholding Public Trust

The Trust Code of Conduct states that every one of us, including consultants has a duty to behave in ways that actively uphold public trust and give people in confidence in the integrity of the Trust. No consultant must ever behave, at work or in public, in a manner which may damage the reputation of the Trust.

This policy shall be subject to a three yearly review.

This policy was been approved by the board on: 28th September 2016

Name: Mrs Rachel Mallows

Signature: 

Position: Chair of the Board