



NET Academies Trust

Chief Operating Officer Job Description

Reports to:	CEO
Contract:	Permanent, Full Time

Job Purpose

- The prime purpose of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) is to facilitate the best possible educational provision and outcomes by successfully removing any non-academic barriers to achieving Trust goals. This work will include ensuring compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- The COO is integral to the delivery of the Trust's strategic aims and will play a key role as a member of the Trust Leadership Team, providing dynamic leadership, strong management and clear direction across all non-academic services for the Trust.
- This COO is also the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the Trust, taking responsibility for ensuring financial compliance with statutory and legal requirements, as well as being responsible for financial management and reporting across the schools and Trust.
- The COO will strive for operational excellence on the part of every member of the Trust Central Team, ensuring that: the support services functions are well managed on a day to-day basis; systems and processes are rigorous, staff work as one team towards a common purpose and are effectively and efficiently deployed, and perform to the highest standards.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Deputise for the CEO in any aspect of work that does not require an educational background.
- Represent the Trust Central Team at Trust Leadership level, the Trustees and external bodies where appropriate.
- Provide advice to the CEO and Trustees in all aspects of the Trust's non-academic operations.
- Devise and implement the strategy for the Trust Central Team, including staff structures, administrative functions, processes, procedures and performance measures.
- Directly line manage the Finance Manager, HR Manager, Estates Manager and other managers across the Central Team function as agreed.
- Have indirect line management responsibility for all non-teaching staff across Trust sites.
- Deliver effective change management.

Service Delivery

- Lead on risk management and mitigation, strengthening control, ensuring that the CEO, Headteachers and Trustees are apprised of risks and issues and that these are being mitigated and managed appropriately

- Ensure the Trust complies with all legal and statutory requirements including GDPR and the Freedom of Information Act.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Evaluate business, operational and financial systems. Analyse and resolve complex issues and provide alternative solutions and process improvement plans as needed.
- Lead the development and maintenance of all MAT policies and procedures within the post holder's areas of responsibility.
- Carry out due diligence on any schools joining the Trust.

HR

- Provide strategic leadership, direction and management in HR, ensuring high standards and the development of systems appropriate to the Trust.
- Oversee the recruitment process across the Trust.
- Oversee the production of all HR policies and ensure a HR framework is adhered too across the organisation.

Finance

- Provide strategic leadership, direction and management in Finance, ensuring high standards and the development of systems appropriate to the Trust.
- Develop and maintain a 3-year financial plan, considering DfE and relevant Government guidelines.
- In conjunction with Headteachers, prepare school budgets.
- Lead on the development and operation of Finance policies and procedures. Ensure compliance within the schools.
- Maximise grant funding and ensure that funding is appropriately used.
- Ensure that annual accounts are externally audited, presented and adequately supported by the underlying records of each school; including the maintenance of effective systems of internal control.
- Ensure the Trust complies with the Academies Financial Handbook, Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practices of the Charities Commission.
- Ensure follow up on recommendations of Internal and External Audits.
- Ensure returns to the ESFA and other funding agencies are completed correctly and on time.
- Ensure the Trust has the correct insurance cover.

Procurement & Contract Management

- Ensure all contracting and procurement activities are fully compliant with public sector legislation and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure that 'Best Value' principles are applied to all appropriate purchasing decisions.
- Manage the Trust's procurement activities and ensure they remained aligned with Trust's vision and values. Key activities will include; procurement strategy development, leading negotiations with suppliers, contract and supplier management, contract development, competitive tendering, market research and benchmarking.
- Manage certain contracts across the Trust and provide oversight and guidance to ensure delegated contracts are managed effectively.
- Take responsibility for delivery of Trust wide capital projects.

Facilities Management

- Provide strategic leadership, direction and management in Estates/Assets, ensuring high standards and the development of systems appropriate to the Trust.

- Establish clear accountability for Health & Safety management across the Trust; reporting risks and mitigations
- Manage the assets of the Trust, ensuring it has an appropriate asset replacement plan that is being adhered to, including buildings and IT. Lead the development of Capital funding bids and maximise income generation.
- Ensure there is a fully embedded PPM schedule across the Trust schools

ICT Strategic Lead

- Provide strategic leadership, direction and management in ICT, ensuring high standards and the development of systems appropriate to the Trust.
- Develop a 5-year ICT refresh plan

Other

- Ensure the provision of an effective clerking and company secretary service to the Board of Trustees;
- Develop and manage a PR and marketing strategy which effectively promotes the Trust and its academies, both locally and nationally;
- Ensure that the Trust and academies' websites are up to date, fully compliant and in line with Trust brand;
- Ensure that the Trust's social media accounts are regularly updated in line with Trust brand;
- Perform other duties as reasonably required in supporting the development of the Trust.

Person Specification

Qualifications and Professional Development	Desired	Essential
A qualified accountant	*	
Business or accountancy qualifications		*
Degree or equivalent level qualification	*	
Evidence of ongoing professional development		*
Knowledge, Skills and Competencies		
Knowledge of accounting standards within the sector	*	
Strong leadership and management skills		*
Up to date knowledge and understanding of issues, legislation and guidance affecting academies		*
Strong commercial awareness		*
Strong ICT skills		*
Experience		
Strong track record of successful financial leadership at a senior level – minimum 5 years		*
Experience of leading finance in a multi-site operation	*	
Experience of a senior level finance role within the education sector	*	
Experience of leading and managing large programmes and projects, with a combination of direct delivery responsibility and delivering through a range of partners		*
Experience of management of major change initiatives		*
Successful senior leader with experience of delivering improved achievement and school improvement	*	
Behaviour and Other Related Characteristics		
Open-minded and receptive to new ideas, approaches and challenges		*
Places high priority on effective team working		*
Prioritise and manage own time effectively		*
Work under pressure and to deadlines		*
Eager to achieve challenging professional goals		*
Take responsibility for their own professional development		*
Identify with the NET vision and values		*
Able to engage and communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders, modifying style as appropriate to the audience.		*
Able to lead, develop and motivate direct and indirect reports		*