



Central Funding & Appeals Policy

For the academies within TAMAT

This Central Funding and Appeals Policy was approved and adopted by the Trust Board: Aut 2025
It will be reviewed: Aut 2026
Version 25.0

Rationale

The Academies Financial Handbook (DfE) makes clear that a Multi-Academy Trust has the freedom to amalgamate a **proportion** of general annual grant (GAG) funding from all its academies to form one central fund to be used to meet the normal running costs at any of its constituent academies within the trust. Whilst this is often referred to as '*top-slicing*' TAMAT call this our *Central Management Charge*.

For the academic/financial year 2025/2026 TAMAT will retain 6% of a constituent academies GAG funding excluding:

- Pupil Premium Funding
- Any academy specific sports grants (i.e. Sports Premium)
- Universal Free School Meals Funding
- Top-Up Funding for special educational needs (SEN) or Additional Educational Needs funding (AEN) in mainstream academies

TAMAT will give consideration to the funding needs and allocations of each constituent academy. There is an appeals mechanism which is described within this policy document for academies who may feel that they are being treated unfairly by the TAMAT *Central Management Charge*.

The *Central Management Charge* will be used to fund (but is not limited to) the following expenditure on behalf of the academies within TAMAT:

- External Audit Fees
- Internal Audit Fees
- Accountancy Fees (relating to consolidation of accounts monthly and annual)
 - ESFA Returns
 - Bank charges
 - Annual actuary re-valuation fees
- School Improvement Support (from the Trust)
- TAMAT central Business team salaries including: CEO, CFO, Central Inclusion Leader, Central Safeguarding Leader, Clerk and central admin
- Budgeting and accounting software
- Agreed CPD for staff
- Payroll administration and pension returns
- HR and Legal consultancy services
- MIS including assessment
- MAT Strategic priorities

Separate accounts relating to the running of TAMAT will be maintained and made available to all TAMAT academies.

Academies joining TAMAT will be expected to fund the following from their conversion grant or from any Revenue or Capital reserves held to allow them to be fully integrated into TAMAT Budgeting, Financial Management and HR systems:

- Budgeting, Financial Management and HR System
- Any legal costs relating to conversion

Academies joining TAMAT will also be expected to use TAMAT preferred suppliers for ICT services, Banking Services and Insurance Services and comply with compliance and premises regulations.

TAMAT reserves the right to amend this policy on an annual basis at the beginning of each financial year. Where appropriate the *Central Management Charge* may be adjusted to reflect the costs relating to that financial year, the increasing services provided directly by TAMAT or cost savings generated through streamlining of back-office functions. The *Central Management Charge* will be kept under review by the Executive Leadership Team, as TAMAT's work develops, and recommendations from that body will be considered by the Business Committee.

GAG Pooling

GAG pooling can help to alleviate financial pressures within individual academies during periods of fluctuating income and expenditure. All monies will be held in a central bank account, however, in the immediate future, monies will be designated to each academy.

TAMAT reserves the right to review the relative benefits of introducing a more extensive pooling policy on an annual basis at the beginning of each financial year. The Executive Leadership Team will be fully consulted before a proposal is put to the Trust Board. If implemented, where appropriate pooling may be adjusted to reflect the costs incurred in the previous financial year.

Appeals

The Academies Financial handbook states:

5.30 If a trust decides to pool GAG, it **must** consider the funding needs and allocations of each constituent academy. The trust **must** have an appeals mechanism and an appeal can be escalated to DfE, if not resolved. DfE's decision will be final and can result in the pooling provisions being disappplied.

TAMAT appeals process is:

- The constituent academies have 10 working days from approval of budget to appeal
- Appeals should be made in writing directly to the CEO
- The CEO will consider the appeal and notify the academy of their decision within 10 working days of receipt of the written appeal
- If this outcome is still not satisfactory then the academy can appeal directly in writing to the Trust Board

- If the outcome of the Trust Board response is still not satisfactory, the Head of the Academy can put their appeal in writing to the DfE.