
UKAT 30

ENRICHING COMMUNITIES THROUGH EMPOWERING, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



University of
Kent

Academies Trust
(UKAT)

SPONSORED BY
University of
Kent

Welcome

Welcome to University of Kent Academies Trust (UKAT).

This booklet provides insight into the Trust, useful context about our Lead Sponsor – the University of Kent – and a user-friendly list of FAQs to answer any queries you might have about UKAT.

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Established in 1965, the University of Kent has grown from 500 students and 150 staff to an institution attracting thousands of students around the World.

The University produces world-class research across its entire academic community. We are enormously proud to have them as our Lead Sponsor and look forward to sharing the advantages of this sponsorship with our staff, students, parents, Trustees and the wider school community.



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University of Kent

Achievements

- Awarded Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)
- Ranked in the top 20 for research output and research intensity in Times Higher Education (THE), based on the most recent Research Excellence Framework, outperforming 11 of the 24 Russell Group universities
- Ranked 48th out of 131 UK higher education institutions in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2021, having risen six places from the previous year
- Ranked in the top 10% of the world's universities for international outlook in the Times Higher Education (THE) 2021
- Awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize in December 2019 for the work of the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE)

Prestigious

- Centre for Journalism (CfJ) graduate, Kenneth Sanchez, won the Student Journalist Award at the Amnesty Media Awards 2020
- A second-year student studying Sociology and Social Policy at Kent School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR) received The Diana Award 2020 for supporting mental health globally
- Kent and Medway Medical School (KMMS), a collaboration between the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University, welcomed its first students in September 2020
- Retained its European Commission HR Excellence in Research (EIR) Award following its six-year review, validating its long-term commitment to the career development of its researchers
- Won the Outstanding Library Team Award at the 2019 Times Higher Education (THE) Awards

Inspirational

- As part of the University's COVID-19 response Kent provided specialist equipment and volunteers, and is working with Imperial College London to aid research for COVID-19 therapies
- Research at the University of Kent is making a difference across the world. Kent's academics work alongside organisations outside academia, from media outlets to research partners in industry
- Recent and current Kent PhD students have worked in widespread areas, including: the gig economy; wildlife trade; film and drama practice; autism, intellectual disability and community care; social justice; philanthropy; charting resistance activities in WW2 in Paris
- The University attracts external funding that frequently exceeds £18 million per annum. Kent has doctoral training partnerships with a range of bodies which give students access to a wide variety of funding
- Kent is committed to maintaining and developing good relations with local communities. Kent is very proud of its students and the positive contribution they make to the region. Last year, Kent students contributed over 77,000 hours of voluntary work.

Engaged

- Kent has an extensive study abroad programme with over 170 universities in 39 countries. Most of their programmes offer opportunities to study or work in Europe
- Kent is a recipient of a grant worth over €1.1m, to support student and staff mobility across Europe under the Erasmus+ scheme
- Kent offers Dual UK and European qualifications (international double awards) at Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral level
- Kent staff can apply for funding to undertake two to five days training/teaching opportunities at our Erasmus partner universities or other relevant organisations within Europe

Global

As our sponsor, the University of Kent invests whole-heartedly in its schools/academies and wants to achieve the best possible outcomes for the students, parents, carers, staff and the wider community of UKAT.

The dedication and commitment to making UKAT schools unique, outstanding and leaders in education is 100% clear in the number of diverse, thoughtful and intellectually challenging projects in place across UKAT's modern offering.

Kent has been pivotal in cultural context setting within UKAT academies and its wider community and continues to act as a beacon of educational growth. The University brings countless long-term benefits to UKAT schools and its communities.

As part of the UKAT family, your academy's students will have the opportunity to apply for a bespoke fast track pathway to join the Sixth Form.

The UKAT Sixth Form offers a broad and exciting range of learning pathways for students to progress to level 3 courses. If your students follow this pathway, they can take advantage of a wide range of university programmes and undergraduate facilities based at the Medway Universities campus, with exclusive, bespoke opportunities to engage with Higher Education.

Students can benefit from a curriculum which is expertly shaped by University of Kent lecturers and undergraduates, study skill support and access to the University of Kent facilities. This gives UKAT students a personalised taste of the world of Higher Education. Through our innovative careers service, we also encourage students to consider dynamic employment pathways in this ever-changing world of work.

Through the UKAT Sixth form, we are proud to:

- Lay the foundations for our students to develop successful careers by offering a range of courses to support university, apprenticeship and employment pathways.
- Offer Level 3 qualifications, including both BTEC and A-level.
- Provide a foundation for collaboration with our UKAT Academies.
- Deliver a curriculum shaped by University of Kent lecturers and undergraduates, along with study skills support and unparalleled access to University of Kent facilities.
- Provide a unique insight into the world of Higher Education.

The UKAT Sixth Form is currently providing a top-tier educational package, featuring a range of interesting and challenging opportunities for around 400 students across Years 12 and 13.



UKAT Sixth Form

UKAT Governance

When joining UKAT, your school's governance will become a part of a high-quality, collaborative and skilled overarching structure.

Retaining your School or Academy's Governance

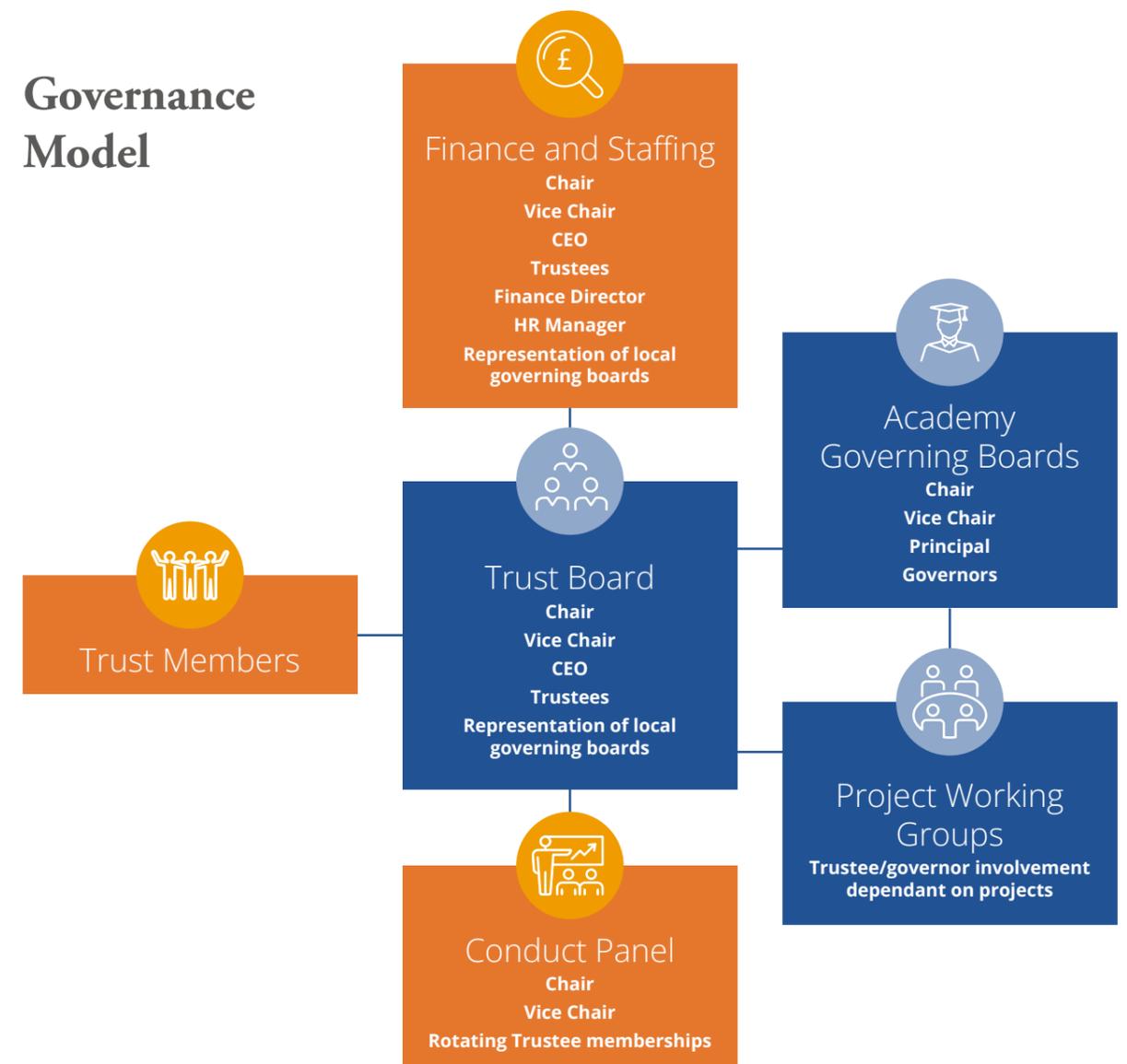
Joining a MAT can raise many questions amongst stakeholders. UKAT's approach ensures that as much governance as possible is conducted at the academy level.

Your school will retain:

- **Governing bodies** as Local Governing Bodies with genuine decision-making power.
- **School principals and senior leadership teams**, who will work with UKAT's Executive.
- **Principals and Trust Board** on a range of Trust-wide projects
- **Finance leads** with places on our Finance Committee.

We are open to discussing Hub governance models if this might be of interest to your school or academy.

Governance Model



UKAT30 Strategy

Allan Osborne, CEO

At UKAT, we strive to be at the top of our field, unlocking the potential of the young people and families we serve. We are constantly working with our staff, trustees and stakeholders to develop positively as a Trust by improving the quality, efficiency, innovation and culture of our practice. Together, we can strengthen our service and moral purpose.



To continuously grow there must be continuous reflection and improvement. And in order to improve, we must clearly articulate that it is necessary.

Our core business is teaching and learning. Effective corporate governance enables the efficient operation of the academies within our Trust family. We must regularly remind ourselves that our core purpose is to **deliver better outcomes for children and young people.**

I hope this strategy brings cogency and coherence to our pursuit of improving our provision. We will be relentless in our efforts to improve outcomes for all.



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FOCUS AREA 1

Improving recruitment and retention

We aim to attract, select and retain talented staff who will actively contribute to the Trust's strategic aspirations. We seek to build up a workforce which is driven and committed to continuous learning and development. The Trust will attract and engage ambitious individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, heritages and sexualities, and will promote inclusion of staff at all levels who are deaf, blind or have learning disabilities.

Aim: To retain talented staff within the Trust for 10 years

- Develop the Trust's employer brand as an organisation with ambition and a sound future.
- Develop the 'people section' on the Trust's website to improve people attraction.
- Empower staff to raise the profile of the Trust as an outstanding employer.
- Identify selection techniques to enable the recruitment of individuals with skills, behaviours and values reflecting that of the Trust.
- Develop innovative approaches to recruitment and provide training to those involved.
- Select and engage individuals with ambition.
- Develop the induction experience and provide a timely introduction to create a sense of belonging and enable staff to proactively engage with their role.
- Ensure a seamless transition from effective induction to ongoing professional development.

FOCUS AREA 2

Developing financial viability and sustainability

Aim: To strengthen the Trust's infrastructure

- Action our detailed three-year financial strategy for each academy, linked to a fully costed School Development Plan.
- Work towards holding reserves for each academy, in line with the Trust policy.
- Implement ICFP across the Trust to optimise ways of working.
- Shape efficient staffing structures and deployment to drive continuous improvement.
- Keep systems and processes under review with the aim of reducing and/or rationalising expenditure.
- Review back office functions across academies and the central team to maximise value.

FOCUS AREA 3

Improving outcomes of HAP; DVG and SEN-D

Aim: To have an increased focus on vulnerable groups across the trust

- Implement a Trust-wide SEND/PP strategy.
- Empower staff across the Trust to rigorously monitor and evaluate practice.
- Encourage the effective use of data to bring about improved outcomes.

FOCUS AREA 4

Improving Sixth Form outcomes

Aim: To put our Sixth Form students on track to develop strong careers

- Place students on suitable Key Stage 5 courses to increase retention from Year 12 to Year 13, and provide the necessary tools to complete.
- Further tailor advice and guidance to individual student choices and future careers.
- Develop curriculum expertise and delivery across the organisation to improve students' abilities to think and write synoptically.

FOCUS AREA 5

Developing high-quality teaching

Aim: To develop teaching and learning in every classroom

- Implement school-to-school peer reviews and trust-wide reading strategies.
- Implement high-quality transition work, especially between Key Stages 2 & 3 and 4 & 5.

FOCUS AREA 6

Developing inspection and BI improvements, including for Ofsted visits

Aim: To have every school within our Trust be judged good or better

- Create a robust plan of action that addresses any outlined issues in the Ofsted reports for all schools.
- Create a trajectory of Improvement document.
- Create a plan to implement and action a Quality Assurance Framework.

FOCUS AREA 7

Improving leadership throughout the Trust

Aim: To identify and improve aspects of leadership Trust-wide

- Improve governance and the impact of governance on our schools and children.
- Embed risk management strategies in all of our schools.
- Increase MAT-to-MAT work, including governance development and research.
- Implement our own Middle and Senior Leader development programmes.
- Provide appropriate training and support to everyone in the central team.
- Ensure a robust, Trust-wide approach for safeguarding.

Implementing a School Improvement Team

Aim: To support and guide our academies through the creation of a School Improvement Team

- Put in place a School Improvement Strategy, highlighting the various levels of support available to academies.
- Develop a more cost-efficient model to deploy support from one academy to another.
- Effectively deploy Trust intervention staff and complete appropriate, focused work based on relevant data and need.
- Use secondary specialists to support intervention and leadership across the MAT in Maths, English, Science, History, Geography, Computer Science, and Teaching and Learning.

UKAT is an established Trust focused on developing the life experience and opportunities of its students, parents, carers, and staff in Medway, Kent, and the surrounding community.

We are ambitious and courageous. We want young people to aspire to reach their goals and aspirations above and beyond any limitations they might perceive. This means that each UKAT Academy is different in its approach to learning and has its own core beliefs and values established.

FAQs

Why should my school or academy join a Multi-Academy Trust?

There are numerous benefits for schools and academies to join a MAT, for their staff, students, parents and the wider community.

ADVANTAGES

- To gain efficiencies when procuring, e.g. for ICT or catering services, allowing them to dedicate more of the school budget to teaching and learning.
- To enter a collaborative network of staff who can support each other's professional development.
- To receive support from a central Trust team across all areas of academy operation, from local governance, admin, recruitment and curriculum planning.
- To allow students and staff to take advantage of the close relationship that the Trust has with the University of Kent.

Fundamentally, UKAT believes that the trust structure exists to serve our academies. UKAT strives to strike a balance between providing a central trust and university relationship that supports, challenges and provides opportunities to educate their students in the way that they know best. When joining UKAT, you can expect to keep your local governors, Principal/Headteacher, and powers, such as defining academy-level policies.

Who is the University of Kent Academies Trust?

The MAT is sponsored and supported by the University of Kent, a leading University that provides academic and vocational opportunities for our students, and professional development opportunities for our staff.

We are passionate about nurturing, growing and developing people, so that the students and communities we serve have the opportunity to thrive and flourish. We want to excite and motivate those who work with us and create real passion and joy around learning.

Why was the Trust created?

The University of Kent, UKAT's Lead Sponsor, formed UKAT to support its academies with school improvement, capital improvement and collaboration.

The Trust was set up to be a leading educator, outward-looking and a collaborative MAT which has an 'all through' and strongly inclusive provision.

Our vision for the future is to expand and grow UKAT by developing and supporting the people we serve – including young people and their families – throughout our local Kent and Medway communities.

Why does UKAT want to grow?

UKAT is well-positioned to grow, with successful and thriving established academies. The time is right to further our vision and values, and positively improve our provision through growth. This will include achieving economies of scale to deliver more funding directly to our students and ensuring that our staff have more capacity to focus on teaching and learning. We will further expand our offering by integrating the expertise of our valued schools and academies into the wider Trust ethos. Discover our detailed vision for growth in the UKAT Prospectus.

Our Offer

Joining the Trust

Joining UKAT follows the usual conversion or merger processes, depending on the circumstances of your school/academy. These processes usually take approximately six months to complete, and UKAT will support your school or academy through them, including the drafting of the application to the RSC to convert or merge, and running the community and TUPE consultations required during the process.

What are the TUPE measures UKAT expects to propose?

Whilst Multi-Academy Trusts are not bound by national pay and conditions, UKAT adheres to the Burgundy Book, the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document, NJC conditions and the Green Book.

As such, while there may be some TUPE measures depending on the circumstances of each school/academy – for example to bring all academies in-line with the UKAT pay date each month – we do not expect any significant changes to pay and conditions. We will work with the current employer, HR advisors, unions and staff to ensure the process of joining the Trust is as smooth as possible.

What due diligence will UKAT undertake on a school looking to join the Trust?

UKAT will commission financial due diligence on all schools and academies intending to join the Trust. This is in addition to the due diligence that the ESFA will carry out during all applications to the RSC. We will also be required to carry out HR due diligence during the process of joining the Trust, to ensure that TUPE information is correct for your staff.

Depending on the school's circumstances, we may also look to carry out capital, governance or curriculum due diligence. This is not intended to be an investigation – rather, we will be keen to work collaboratively with you to identify where UKAT can support the school/academy and provide services to your staff going forward.

School Improvement Offer

How does UKAT help schools to improve standards?

UKAT takes a logical, structured and evidence-based approach to school improvement. As part of our wider strategy we have established a suite of innovative, proprietary quality assurance tools to enable our academies to:

- understand themselves deeply.
- identify areas of risk.
- create thorough and precise plans to tackle priorities.

This process is driven by comprehensive self-assessment at both academy and departmental levels, and is presented through simple visual reporting outputs that connect to robust planning and actionable strategies. This allows progress and impact to be monitored and challenged across leadership and board levels.

Our 'Departmental Review' model is a key feature of our approach, wherein middle leaders take ownership of evaluating standards via observation of lessons, work scrutiny and student feedback. The output is a simple but powerful colour-coded report that enables leaders at all levels to recognise trends, themes and areas for improvement focus. We align this to our robust support and enhancement

structure, where individual teachers and departments can elevate to bespoke plans that target their individual professional needs, supported and guided by UKAT's central School Improvement Team.

UKAT's appraisal model is fully attuned to our ethos and quality improvement strategy, with colleagues playing an active role in self-evaluating and shaping their annual objectives. All objectives are intrinsically linked to the academy's priority aims, whilst working to industry-aligned professional standards and ensuring the Trust remains a touchstone of best practice.

UKAT is a member of *Challenge Partners*, a practitioner-led network of more than 560 schools across 129 Multi-Academy Trusts. We leverage the expertise, resources and insights that this valuable relationship brings, including annual *Quality Assurance Visits* (inviting review teams from other schools to evaluate our academies and sending UKAT colleagues nationally to join these reviews) and working with local 'hub' networks to access specific insights and resources will can fulfil the needs of our academies. This work overlays our quality improvement strategy to secure external validation and 'sense check' our approach

Can UKAT's approach help schools become 'world class'?

Our high-quality tools and systems are designed to help leaders identify strengths and opportunities within their academies. Through the self-assessment process and generation of performance scores against our framework, academies can isolate specific aspects of their work to fine-tune. Our structured action-planning methodology enables them to make the operational and strategic changes they need, at pace, to address these areas. Our process will immediately highlight genuine strengths and help leaders recognise, celebrate and elevate further.

UKAT's central team works with academies to ensure these best practices are secured, shared and recognised across the Trust and beyond. *Challenge Partners* provides one such method of validating excellence and enabling colleagues to share this work locally, regionally and nationally through Extending Leading Practice networks.

What makes UKAT different?

Through its school improvement model, UKAT articulates its philosophy of 'Centrally Managed, Locally Led'. UKAT recognises its academies as being unique – all taking different journeys towards excellence – and our approach enables them to lead *their* improvement, backed by the Trust. As a small, community-centric Trust, UKAT can offer a dedicated central team to support our academies on their improvement journey, led by a Director of Training and Director of Education who support, monitor, quality assure and assist implementation of key actions; their roles solely dedicated to the task of supporting academies in their standards improvement projects.

UKAT provides a platform to shape the futures of our academies, underpinned by clear expectations, clear accountability and strong resourcing. We value independence and 'difference' and we don't seek to make our academies identical in nature or design.

Our core principles for delivering school improvement are:

- Acting decisively using an evidence-based approach to ensure exceptional standards for our students.
- Basing our improvement work on long-term, sustainable strategies.
- Avoiding gimmicks, 'quick fixes' or acting impulsively.
- Framing our decisions around what is best for our students and our communities.

What is the Director of Training?

The Director of Training (DoT) is based within the central UKAT team and is aligned to the Trust's Director of Education (DoE). They offer a suite of educational and training services to the academies in our family. The team generates capacity and resources to help shape and enhance teaching, learning and assessment standards and drive better outcomes for all of our students.

The DoT leads on the sourcing of – and support for – trainee teachers. They work with academy leaders to identify key vacancies and strategic priorities, and liaise with an established network of training providers to identify and place trainees. The DoT coordinates and oversees the training and development programme for trainees across the Trust. They work locally and regionally to secure high-quality trainees through graduate events, careers fairs and directly through universities, including our sponsor, *The University of Kent*.

Other key functions of the DoT include:

- Monitoring and quality-assurance of staff probationary processes to ensure they receive excellent support, direction and guidance through this critical phase of their professional journey.
- Working with academy leaders to coordinate and implement quality enhancement support plans for staff.
- Leading trust-based professional development programmes that align with the Trust's core strategic priorities and aims.

Finance Offer

Our dedicated team works closely with our academies, undertaking day-to-day financial and business operations. They provide expert support and guidance, ensuring that our academies' strategic plans are appropriately resourced and value for money is obtained.

Day-to-day operations:

- Provision of budgeting and financial software.
- Processing of all financial transactions.
- Bespoke support across the Trust from a highly skilled finance team.
- Budget setting and monitoring.
- Long-term financial planning, forecasting and benchmarking.
- Monthly management accounts providing financial oversight and monitoring of income and expenditure.

Procurement support:

- Centralised procurement across the trust, maximising efficiencies and enabling economies of scale to be realised.
- Contract management procedures, developing strong supplier relationships and ensuring value for money is obtained.
- Compliant tender management processes for large purchases and contracts.

Statutory and DfE:

- Compile and submit all statutory returns including statutory accounts, ESFA returns, HMRC returns, Companies House etc.
- Oversee statutory and internal audits.

Income generation:

- Proactively source and apply for grants, including Capital Improvement Funding.
- Centrally managed lettings, maximising the amount of income generated to be reinvested in each academy.

Innovative solutions and project management:

- Bespoke solutions provided and delivered to suit individual academy requirements, examples include in-house home-to-school transport service and student device purchase schemes.

HR Offer

Our HR Team collaborates closely with Principals, Senior Leaders, and Managers across the Trust, delivering tailored support to meet the unique needs of each school. We offer a responsive and flexible range of HR services, encompassing administration of recruitment, onboarding, contract variation, compliance, wellbeing, payroll, and all other HR transactional tasks.

Wraparound Talent Management:

- Utilising an HR system that facilitates data-driven, evidence-based workforce planning.
- Implementing a unique People programme that fosters trust-wide opportunities for growth, succession, and workforce development, serving as a critical retention tool.

Comprehensive Knowledge of Employment Law and Best Practice:

- Demonstrating expertise in employment law, particularly tailored to the education sector.
- Providing comprehensive support on all aspects of casework and employee relations.

Trust-wide Policies, Guidance, and Training:

- Developing policies, guidance, and training modules specifically designed to address the evolving and complex people challenges faced by schools.

Recruitment Support:

- Leveraging Trust-wide value-for-money advertising arrangements.
- Crafting job profiles, selection tools, and marketing support tailored to individual school needs.
- Managing pre-employment and onboarding processes and providing new starter support.
- Offering access to best practice and compliant recruitment processes.

Preparation of Workforce Returns:

- Ensuring compliance with timely and accurate workforce returns, including workforce census, gender pay gap reporting, ONS, and other government returns.

Fully managed Payroll and Pension Service:

- Delivering a comprehensive payroll and pension service to alleviate administrative burdens.

Staff Wellbeing and Support:

- Providing a dedicated wellbeing and support package, including a portal and self-service resources.

We commit to supporting our academies by providing expert HR services – tailored to their specific requirements – ensuring compliance, efficiency and staff satisfaction across the board.

Be an “associate”

We also have a “try before you buy” approach to joining our trust.

Get in touch to find out about the bespoke packages we have on offer, or become part of our family for a limited time to see if the structures work for you.



Thank you

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