

MAST

Procurement Policy

11/08/2026



MAST

Moving Ahead, Serving Together

Belong • Be Safe • Flourish

This policy reflects the core aims and purpose of MAST. At MAST, we are committed to ensuring that every child is known and every child is enabled. Guided by our values of Belong, Be Safe, Flourish, we create inclusive and nurturing school communities where every individual is recognised, valued and supported. Inspired by the belief that each person is known and called by name, we work together to provide the relationships, opportunities and support that enable all children to grow, achieve and flourish.

1. Purpose

Medway Anglican Schools Trust (MAST) is committed to ensuring that all procurement decisions achieve value for money and demonstrate regularity, propriety, economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public funds.

This policy sets out the minimum procurement and tendering requirements for MAST and its academies.

All procurement must comply with:

- the Academy Trust Handbook;
- the Procurement Act 2023 and associated regulations;
- relevant DfE procurement guidance;
- MAST's Finance Policy; and
- MAST's Scheme of Financial Delegation.

Where there is a conflict between this policy and statutory or regulatory requirements, the statutory or regulatory requirement takes precedence.

2. Principles

All purchasing decisions must:

- achieve value for money;
- be appropriate to the Trust's educational and operational requirements;
- be based on fair and transparent processes;
- consider whole-life costs and quality, not price alone;
- comply with approved budgets and delegated authority;
- consider actual or perceived conflicts of interest;
- include appropriate due diligence on suppliers;
- maintain appropriate segregation of duties; and
- be properly documented to provide an audit trail.

Staff involved in procurement must not accept gifts or hospitality which could, or could reasonably be perceived to, compromise their independence.

3. Procurement thresholds

The following are MAST's minimum internal requirements. Where a more stringent process is required by legislation, a grant condition, a framework agreement or the specific circumstances of a procurement, the more stringent requirement will apply.

Where fewer quotations than required are obtained, the reason must be documented and retained for audit purposes.

Contract values must be calculated on the basis of the total anticipated value of the contract, including any extensions, renewals or options, and expenditure must not be artificially divided to avoid a procurement threshold.

4. Procurement above statutory thresholds

Where a procurement reaches the applicable threshold under the Procurement Act 2023, MAST will comply with the full statutory procurement regime.

The relevant statutory thresholds must be checked at the time the procurement commences as they are subject to change.

Where required by legislation, procurement opportunities and relevant notices will be published through the Government's **Find a Tender** service.

MAST will comply with all applicable requirements relating to:

- procurement procedures;
- publication of notices;
- transparency;
- evaluation;
- award;
- contract information;
- supplier information; and
- contract management.

The current statutory thresholds must be checked before commencing any procurement.

5. Procurement routes

Depending on the value, complexity and circumstances of the requirement, MAST may use:

- quotations;
- competitive tendering;
- open procedures;
- restricted or other appropriate competitive procedures;
- approved procurement frameworks;
- DfE-approved purchasing arrangements; or
- direct award where permitted by the Procurement Act 2023 or other applicable rules.

Where a framework or DfE-approved arrangement provides an appropriate route to market, this should be considered as part of the procurement process.

The Trust should consider DfE procurement opportunities and frameworks where appropriate.

6. Preparation for tender

Before commencing a formal tender, the Trust will establish:

- the objectives and scope of the procurement;
- the specification and required outcomes;
- technical and service requirements;
- contract duration;
- implementation requirements;
- required standards and qualifications;
- safeguarding and site requirements where relevant;
- contract terms and conditions;
- evaluation criteria and weighting; and
- the proposed procurement timetable.

Specifications and evaluation criteria must be clear, proportionate and capable of being applied consistently to all bidders.

7. Invitation to tender

An invitation to tender should include, where appropriate:

- background to the procurement;
- scope and objectives;
- specification;
- technical requirements;
- implementation requirements;
- contract terms and conditions;
- evaluation criteria and weightings;

- submission requirements;
- closing date and time; and
- details of the procurement process.

Tenderers must be given sufficient information to submit comparable bids.

8. Tender evaluation

Tender evaluations must be undertaken by at least two appropriately authorised individuals wherever practicable.

Those involved must declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest. Anyone with a conflict that could affect their objectivity must withdraw from the procurement process.

Evaluation will consider the **most economically advantageous tender**, taking account of the published criteria.

Criteria may include:

- price and whole-life cost;
- quality;
- technical suitability;
- experience and qualifications;
- service levels;
- implementation arrangements;
- financial standing;
- references;
- safeguarding;
- health and safety;
- sustainability; and
- after-sales support.

The lowest price will not automatically be accepted.

The reasons for the procurement decision must be documented, particularly where a tender other than the lowest-priced tender is selected.

9. Tender opening and records

Where formal tenders are required:

- tenders must be submitted by the specified deadline;
- late tenders should not normally be accepted;
- tenders must be kept secure until the closing date and time;
- tenders should be opened in accordance with the Trust's approved procedure;
- the names of tenderers and tender values must be recorded; and
- an appropriate audit trail must be retained.

No tenderer may amend its tender after the submission deadline except where permitted by the applicable procurement procedure and legislation.

10. Due diligence

Appropriate due diligence must be undertaken before appointing a supplier.

Depending on the nature and value of the contract, this may include consideration of:

- financial standing;
- relevant experience;
- qualifications and professional accreditation;
- references;

- insurance;
- quality assurance;
- health and safety;
- safeguarding;
- modern slavery and ethical considerations;
- data protection and cyber security;
- environmental considerations; and
- the supplier's ability to deliver the contract.

For significant building works, appropriate professional advice should be obtained where necessary.

11. Conflicts of interest

All staff, trustees and governors involved in procurement must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Conflicts must be managed in accordance with MAST's Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Anyone with a material conflict must not participate in the evaluation or decision-making process.

12. Approval and award

All procurement decisions must be made within the delegated authority set out in MAST's Scheme of Financial Delegation.

The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility for the Trust's funds and financial affairs.

Where expenditure is outside the approved budget, additional approval must be obtained in accordance with the Finance Policy and Scheme of Financial Delegation.

For procurements above £50,000, a formal tender process and Board approval are required unless a lawful alternative procurement route applies.

Where a specific DfE grant or funding condition requires prior approval, that approval must be obtained before the Trust enters into the contract.

13. Contract award and management

Once a procurement decision has been approved:

- the successful supplier should be formally notified;
- unsuccessful suppliers should be notified where appropriate;
- the contract or purchase order should be issued promptly;
- the agreed specification, price and terms should be retained;
- appropriate contract management arrangements should be established; and
- expenditure should be monitored against the approved contract value.

Contract extensions, variations and renewals must be considered against the original procurement and applicable procurement legislation to ensure that they do not unlawfully circumvent competition requirements.

14. Record keeping

MAST will retain appropriate procurement records, including:

- the business need;
- specification;
- quotations or tenders received;
- evaluation criteria;
- evaluation records;

- due diligence;
- conflicts of interest declarations;
- approval records;
- reasons for the procurement decision;
- contract documentation; and
- relevant correspondence.

Records must be retained in accordance with the Trust's document retention requirements and be available for audit or internal scrutiny.

15. Related party transactions

Procurement involving related parties must comply with the related party transaction requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook and MAST's Finance Policy.

Where DfE prior approval is required, this must be obtained before the transaction is agreed.

Related party transactions must be properly procured, transparent and demonstrate value for money.