

Payroll Services: Invitation to Tender, August – Sept 2024

1. Introduction

This is an Invitation to Tender (ITT) document for Academy Transformation Trust (ATT). We are looking to appoint a payroll services provider to provide an efficient and effective outsourced payroll service for the Trust.

The Trust is looking to appoint a payroll provider covering a period of 3 years beginning April 2025. An option to extend the contract for a further two years will be available.

ATT do not currently have a dedicated HR MIS, therefore we would also like to explore the functionality of any payroll system to support in this area. The wider MIS used by the Trust is Bromcom, so interfacing functionality is required.

2. About Academy Transformation Trust

Academy Transformation Trust is a cross-phase group of academies that was founded in 2011 and, since that time, we have grown to our current family of 21 academies (primary, secondary, post-16 and FE) operating across 10 English local authority areas.

Across the Trust we currently educate approximately 13,000 learners and have approximately 1,800 employees.

Academy Transformation Trust are actively seeking growth and anticipates this happening during the next academic year.

3. Trust Finance and HR Resource

The Trust has a fully centralised finance team. At the top tier, the Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations) is supported by a Head of Finance, Financial Controller, Projects Systems Accountant and four Finance Business Partners- all of whom are qualified accountants via Accounting bodies accreditation and/or experience. Finance Business Partners, who are responsible for site reporting, are responsible for their allocated academies and central functions whilst Finance Officers in a Central Processing Team oversee transactional activities such as raising orders and processing sales and purchase invoices.

All schools within the Trust currently utilise PS Financials for their finance software with a change over to Ipplicit from 1st September 2024. The Trust has a central bank account.

The Trust HR team operates on a Central and Regional basis. The Director and Deputy Director of People Strategy oversee the payroll provision. The team also comprises of Regional HR Business Partners with specific academy allocations and within each academy there is a HR Administrator who is responsible for the academy-level payroll processing. Trust level payroll is administered by the Central HR Co-ordinator. The Trust plans to implement a Payroll and Data Lead role in the next academic year to further enhance our payroll delivery and employee-related data management.

The Trust works to a single payroll number though has its LGPS operating through seven different pension funds (The Teachers' Pension Scheme is the default pensions administrator for teaching staff).

The Trust, as part of its employee benefits package, has available car and tech salary sacrifice schemes that a small number of staff presently engage with.

4. The Tender Process

The objective of this tender is to identify the tenderer that presents the best offer from a quality and price perspective. The criteria by which this tender will be evaluated are detailed within this document. Please ensure that all questions are completed in full, and in the format requested; failure to do so may result in your submission being disqualified.

All enquiries relating to this Tender must be made through Request for Information (RFI) templates. If you wish to receive a Word version of the template, please e-mail tenders@attrust.org.uk. All RFIs should be submitted to the above e-mail address. Should a query be raised that is not commercially confidential, the response will be shared with all tenderers.

Academy Transformation Trust reserves the right to issue supplementary documentation at any time during the tendering process to clarify any issue or amend any aspect of the ITT. This will be done through a Clarification Notice to be e-mailed to tenderers.

In order to ensure tenderers receive all communications relating to this tender, please can you e-mail us at the above e-mail address of your intention to tender by no later than

The Trust reserves the right to cancel the tender process at any point. The Trust is not liable for any costs resulting from any cancellation of this tender process nor for any other costs incurred by those tendering for this contract.

Below is the timetable for this tender:

Event	Date
Issue of Invitation to Tender	9 th August 2024
Confirm intention to bid	Midday, 23 rd August 2024
Last date for RFIs	3 rd September 2024
Tender closing date	Midday, 13 th September 2024
Presentation at ATT Head Office, Sutton Coldfield	19 th September 2024
Tender award	26 th September 2024
10 day standstill period ends	6 th October 2024

Implementation meeting	10 th October 2024
Award Contract	15 th October 2024
Contract start date	1 st April 2025

The evaluation panel will be comprised of the Deputy CEO, Director and Deputy Director of People Strategy, ICT Director, Payroll and Data Lead, plus representatives from the HR administration team, all of whom have technical and sector experience.

Any company intending to submit a tender response MUST submit it intention to tender by e-mail (to tenders@attrust.org.uk) as per the above date. NO tenders will be accepted if an intention to tender is not submitted by the time and date set out in the table.

Completed tenders should be submitted to tenders@attrust.org.uk. The message title should be 'Payroll Tender Submission 2024'. No tender will be opened before the deadline date outlined above. All information in tenders will be kept confidential and will only be shown to those persons who have a right to see it. Late tenders will not be considered as part of the tender assessment. Incomplete tenders will not be considered.

The tender process will include a presentation to the tender panel and other members of Trust staff. Tenderers will be invited to deliver a presentation at a session that will be held at ATT's Head Office (Sutton Coldfield) or over Microsoft Teams on Thursday 19th September and will last approximately one hour (including questions).

Basis of Assessment

ANY BIDDER MUST HAVE CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF PROVIDING PAYROLL SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS/MULTI ACADEMY TRUSTS (bidders who do not possess this experience will have bids not evaluated).

In respect of the pricing submission, the tender with the lowest price will score the maximum marks available. All other tenders will then be scored on a percentage difference method. So, for example, if the lowest tender for core requirements was a cost of £70,000 (this is not meant to be indicative) then this would score 35 marks. A tender priced at £80,000 would score $\frac{£70,000}{£80,000} \times 35 = 30.6$.

The pricing section on assumptions, addition of new schools and delays will be scored based as per qualitative questions.

Qualitative questions will be scored based on the following criteria:

Score	Criteria
0	Question not answered

1	Response provided but is significantly below expectations and/or does not address significant parts of the question.
2	Response is below expectations with a number of notable shortcomings
3	Response is below expectations with some minor shortcomings
4	Response fully meets expectations

Responses will be weighted on the above scoring methodology. For example, a question with a 10% weighting that scores three out of four will result in an 7.5% weighting.

5. Tender Requirements

The evaluation of tenders will be based on the following criteria:

Overall Award Criteria	Sub Criteria	Weighting
Pricing (40%)	Core Requirements	35%
	Assumptions, Additions and Exclusions	5%
Qualitative (60%)	Systems and processes	25%
	Customer Service Provision	15%
	Payroll and HR reports and reporting	10%
	Experience of Working with MATs	5%
	Additional Services	5%

Below are the **core requirements** of the payroll services we require:

- Process payroll data, including changes, on an academy by academy basis;
- Pension administration for 7 LGPS schemes and Teachers' Pension Scheme;
- Payments to staff, HMRC, pension providers etc will be made by the provider from the Trust central bank account by BACs;
- A pay date of normally 22nd of the month.

Pricing Section

For the pricing section, please provide a price for the core requirements set out in the specifications Annex for the period of the contract. This should be provided with a breakdown of the price, and an explanation of the resourcing to be provided to meet the requirements. (35%)

The pricing section should include:

- A total annual cost proposal over a three year period;
- The annual cost should be based on projected employee numbers of 1,800
- Any inflationary or other provisions for annual or periodic increases in fees;
- Any assumptions in the costing proposal;
- A clear indication of provision provided as part of the fee;
- Details of services listed in the specification that are excluded or separately chargeable
- Fees chargeable for additional provisions not included as part of the annual cost proposal;

Set out key assumptions made about the work involved to inform your pricing. Also, set out the approach to pricing for any new schools that may join the Trust in future and the approach to charging for any additional tasks which we may request from time to time. (5%, 500 word limit)

Qualitative Section

Systems and Processes

Please provide details of key systems that will be deployed to provide the service. In particular please explain how efficient the system is processing payroll tasks and explain what functionality your product has to act as the Trust's HR system. Key system features such as the user interface, security, data transfer protocols and reporting functionality should be outlined. Please state the background and experience of the Account Manager that would be involved in managing the payroll service.

Finally, please complete the table set out on pages 12-14 of this document as an appendix to your response to this section (the table and its contents will not count against the word limit).

(25%, 2,500 word limit for main response)

Customer Service Provision

Please describe your commitment to providing outstanding customer service. The payroll service must be provided on an accurate and timely basis. Deadlines for payment and submission of returns must be strictly adhered to. Please provide typical response times to deal with issues and queries.

As part of your response, please set out a project plan with accompanying narrative to explain how you intend to enable the Trust to go live for the contract commencement date of 1st April 2025.

Describe the arrangements you will put in place to ensure the timely availability of staff resources to support the ongoing delivery of the payroll service. Describe how you intend to manage resource shortfalls due to sickness absence, training and extended leave and how you would resource any unexpected additional requirements such as the implementation of backdated staff pay awards. Most notably, provide assurance that your organisation has the capacity to deliver ATT's core requirements. (15%, 1,500 word limit)

Payroll and HR Reports and Reporting

Your tender should provide details of standard payroll reports to be issued on a monthly basis. The response should also provide information on the variety of HR reports the system makes available. Reporting capabilities to provide bespoke or ad hoc reports should be outlined. The ability for users to produce specific reports from the system should be highlighted. Examples of a standard monthly payroll report should be provided on an anonymised basis (10%, 1,000 word limit)

Experience of Working with MATs

Detail your experience of working with Multi Academy Trusts, identify the typical issues you have encountered in supporting MATs to manage their payroll and what you have done to ensure timely completion of payroll activities. (5%, 500 word limit)

Additional Services

Detail what experience and expertise you have to support us with additional services (with examples of where you have supported other organisations, preferably MATs), with such activities to support them with adhering to payroll regulations. Set out any other factors which you would like to add to your submission that demonstrates your ability to provide effective payroll services and general support and/or advice to ATT. (5%, 500 word limit)

6. General Tender Information

Corporate Actions

Tenderers should provide details on imminent take-overs, reorganisations, staff movements/rationalisation, planned changes to the core business, planned changes to the computer environment or its support and any other information which may impact the delivery of the services. Failure to disclose such information, that is subsequently disclosed or discovered, and that would have significantly altered ATT's assessment of your tender could be considered grounds for termination of any agreement between the Trust and the organisation to which this tender is awarded.

Preparation of Tender

It is the tendering organisation's responsibility to ensure they are fully informed and satisfied by their own observations and enquiries as to the nature, extent and scope of the work required if awarded the contract. ATT requires all tendering organisations to ensure that they are in a position to perform their obligations under the agreement should they be awarded the contract.

Inducements to Purchase and Potential Conflicts of Interest

The tenderer shall not offer to ATT or its representatives as a variation of the conditions of the contract, or as an agreement collateral to it, any advantage other than a discount against the contract price (which should be captured within the pricing submission). The tendering organisation must disclose any potential conflict of interest as part of its tender, alongside how the organisation plans to mitigate this/these risk(s).

Standard Terms and Condition

Tenderers should include their standard contract terms and conditions with their tender.

References

Tenderers should provide two references (at least one should be a MAT or organisation from the education sector) with their tender and include contact details for the clients. References should be provided on letter-headed documentation.

Clarifications

We may contact you during the evaluation period to clarify an answer you have provided. This will be done by e-mail through use of Clarification Notices.

FORM OF TENDER

Dear Academy Transformation Trust representatives

1. I/we have read the information provided in your Invitation to Tender and, subject to and upon the terms and conditions contained therein, I/we offer to supply the services described in the said tender documents in such manner as may be required.
2. Terms and Conditions: I/we agree that this tender and any contract which may result there from shall be based upon those included in the Invitation to Tender Pack.
3. The prices quoted in this tender are valid for acceptance for 90 days from the final day for submission of tenders and I/we confirm that the terms of the Tender will remain binding upon me/us and may be accepted by you at any time before that date.
4. Law: I/we agree that the construction, validity, performance and execution of any contract that may result from this Tender shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with English Law and shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of England and Wales.
5. I/we agree to bear all costs incurred by me/us in connection with the preparation and submission of this tender and to bear any further costs incurred by me/us prior to the award of any contract.

Signature:

Print Full Name:

Date:

In the capacity of:

(Please state official position, eg. Director, Sales Manager, etc.)

being a person duly authorised to sign tenders on behalf of:

Company Name:

Address:

DECLARATION OF BONA FIDE TENDER

1. We certify that this is a bona fide tender, and that we have not fixed or adjusted the amount of the tender by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person. We also certify that we have not done and we undertake that we will not do at any time before the hour and date specified for the return of this tender any of the following acts:

a) Communicate to a person other than the person calling for those tenders the amount or approximate amount of the proposed tender, except where the disclosure, in confidence, of the approximate amount of the tender was necessary to obtain insurance premium quotations required for the preparation of the tender.

b) Enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person that they shall refrain from tendering or as to the amount of any tender to be submitted.

c) Offer or pay or give or agree to pay or give any sum of money or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to any other tender or proposed tender for the said work any act or thing of the sort described above.

2. We further certify that the principles described in paragraph 1 above have been, or will be, brought to the attention of all sub-contractors, suppliers and associate companies providing services or materials connected with the tender, and any contract entered into with the sub-contractors, suppliers or associated companies will be made on the basis of compliance with the above principles by all parties.

3. In this certificate, the word “person” includes any persons and any body or association, corporate or otherwise; and “any agreement or arrangement” includes any such transaction, formal or informal, and whether legally binding or not.

4. I confirm that I accept any breach of the conditions of this Declaration of Bona Fide Tender will inevitably lead to the termination of the agreement by ATT.

Signature:

Print Full Name:

Date:

In the capacity of:

(Please state official position, eg. Director, Sales Manager, etc.)

being a person duly authorised to sign tenders on behalf of:

Company Name:

Address:

Annex: Specification for payroll service provider

Services to be provided by payroll provider:

- User-friendly system that can be user-restricted based on permissions
- Employee self-service area for employee changes, such as personal details
- Timely processing of payroll data to ensure staff are paid accurately on the designated paydate;
- Ability for ATT representatives to process changes to payroll to include, but not necessarily limited to, starters, leavers, change of academy within the Trust, change of pay scale or grade;
- Calculation and processing of deductions from payroll, including tax, pensions, national insurance, salary sacrifice, payroll giving and other deductions, as appropriate;
- Calculation and processing of overtime, casual and hourly pay;
- Payment of net wages to staff by BACs from the nominated bank account(s) including special payments outside of the normal pay run;
- Calculation and processing of occupational and statutory sickness, maternity, adoption, paternity, and maintenance of appropriate records;
- Handling salaries, allowances, overtime, deductions for unpaid leave, strike action deductions;
- Calculation and payment of statutory deductions on a timely basis;
- Calculation and payment of employer and employee contributions to the Local Government Pension Schemes and the Teachers Pension Scheme;
- Operate salary sacrifice and net pay deduction schemes e.g. electric car lease, cycle to work, childcare vouchers etc
- The option to provide payrolled benefits in kind rather than P11Ds
- Apply the apprenticeship levy threshold to the total payroll and ensure the Trust pays the correct levy on a monthly basis;
- Electronic payslips – bidders to specify which method they provide;
- HMRC compliant reporting, including RTI;
- Services to be provided by payroll provider on a periodic basis, as determined by need, to the timetables dictated by the relevant stakeholder or government agency, unless otherwise stated;
- A named Account Manager and support officer(s) to assist with payroll queries;
- Support the transition of all existing school payroll data to the new system and provider;

- Support with HMRC, DWP and other relevant government departments on payroll related issues, including the payment of deductions, levies and tax;
- The payroll system must have the facility to maintain multiple pay scales and rates;
- The payment of performance pay, including bonuses where relevant, and inflationary or other uplifts to pay scales;
- Support to move to different ranges and pay rates if the Trust chooses to do so during the contract;
- Provision of P45s, P60s, P11ds (if relevant) and other tax documents;
- Auto-enrolment with either TPS or LGPS;
- Pension reporting and returns to TPS and the LGPS as required by the schemes including the End of Year Certificate (EOYC) provision
- Automatically update tax, levy, allowances and pension rates;
- The ability to run the payroll on a different date if required by the Trust;
- Ability to interface between payroll system and Bromcom and Iplacit
- Be in a position to commence the contract on 1 April 2025.

Reports to be provided:

Prior to payroll run:

Payroll report including draft payslip detailing pay and deductions for each member of staff.

A payroll variance report identifying changes from the prior month.

BACs payment report showing payments to be made.

Bidders should specify what reports they produce, providing examples.

After payroll run:

Final suite of reports above for accounting and audit purposes.

Bidders should explain how they will work with the Trust to deliver data that can be used for journaling into the Trust's future finance system, Iplacit. It should be downloadable into Excel or other format that allows data to be allocated to academies and cost centres – journals will be posted centrally to each academy's nominal codes within the Trust system, and this needs to be as streamlined as possible.

Workforce data including staff numbers by category and full time equivalent rates.

Annual gender pay gap providing the data required by the Government.

The bidder should indicate the level of tailoring of reports that can be accommodated.

Payroll system specification and requirements

Specification/requirement	Does your system have this functionality and included in your pricing quote? Y/N	Is this available as an optional extra (if yes, please give cost)
Onboarding module:		
Self Service portal for all employees		
Ability to upload ID and qualification documents, and complete new starter documents		
Record of pre-employment checks - DBS, references, Occupational H medical and monitor progress of checks		
Copies of new starter policies and ability to read and confirm/acknowledge		
Ability to issue offer and contract through the system using automated templates		
Ability to complete new starter induction checklist from automated template		
Asset management - list of required and issued equipment		
Link through to compliance training in the training module		
Employee records:		
Personal info - DOB, NI number, address etc..		
Next of Kin / emergency contacts		
Post (with DfE descriptors for workforce census) / Contract / t&c's/employment history		
Pay records/elements		
Absence records		
Pension scheme/records		
Qualification/credentials		
Self-service portal:		
User friendly for staff at all levels		
Holiday booking and approval by line manager (approval process required)		
Special leave of absence request and approval by line manager/Principal (approval process required)		
Sickness entry and self certification return to work forms completed (email/workflow to employee to ask them to complete)		
Probation meeting dates, notifications/forms to complete (workflow required)		
Anniversary dates and notifications - work anniversary, birthday etc..		
Home page for company policies		
Landing page / link to Employee benefits		
Ability for employees to complete various claims through the portal		
Claims:		
Ability to input overtime claims through system (approval process required)		
Ability to input mileage claims through system (approval process required)		

Ability to input expenses claims through system (approval process required)		
Ability to pull reports once authorised to process for payroll		
Single Central Record:		
Information within the SCR to be automatically updated from the onboarding module		
Reports facility (including OFSTED/compliance reporting)		
Facility to include non-employees (e.g. contractors, governors etc...)		
School Workforce Census:		
Ability to submit staff workforce census to the DfE in the required format		
Training/CPD module:		
Training records		
Workflows required for refresher training		
Copies of certificates can be uploaded and stored		
Reporting facility		
Ability to link to training platform e.g. National College		
Organisation information:		
Organisation structure / chart (preferably available in Office 365)		
Multi post management - e.g. multiple contracts/sites/hours/working weeks		
Nominal Codes for budget holders (split roles)		
Ability to manage matrix line management structure		
Flexibility of the system to enable access restrictions to allow for both local school input/access to data as well as centralised Trust overview/access to data		
Payroll module:		
Full payroll module available - pay related records		
Pay scale tables		
Ability to apply incremental increase via bulk upload		
Ability to apply cost of living increase via bulk upload		
Absence:		
Multiple absence entitlements and T&C's (leave and pay - Teachers and support)		
Track and notify line managers / HR managers/ Advisors (Workflow required)		
Reporting facility		
Case Management:		
Ability to track and monitor casework by type (disciplinary, grievance, capability etc)		
Ability to attach/save documents to each case		
Ability to create casework bundles automatically from the information stored in the system		
Reporting facility		
Performance Development (Appraisal) module:		
Reminder dates (workflow required)		
Full management of appraisal process including setting objectives and tracking progress		
Reporting facility		
Reports:		
Full suite of reporting		

Dashboard facility		
Exposes full dataset in a datamart or similar for use in Trust Data Warehouse and Power BI		
Off-Boarding:		
Ability for leaders to upload resignations/ leavers via requisition workflow		
Calculation of outstanding annual leave entitlement if applicable		
Feed to other systems – finance/IT for removal of system access		
Prompt to asset list for return company assets		
Links to other systems:		
Two way open API *this is essential		
Existing (or heavily in testing phase) two way integration with Bromcom/Iplicit		